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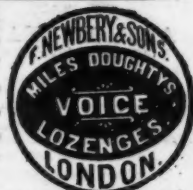
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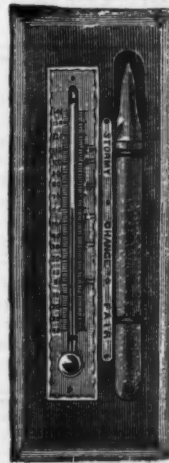
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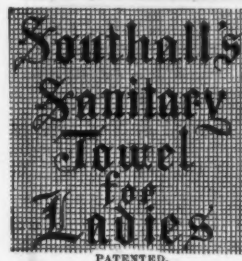
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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER 1883.

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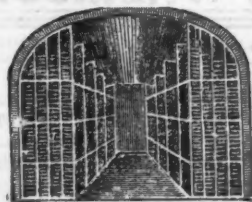
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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER 1883.

Jack's Courtship:

A SAILOR'S YARN OF LOVE AND SHIPWRECK.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL.

CHAPTER I.

A SHORT PREFACE.

SHIPMATE, have you ever seen such a sight as a dog chasing his tail on a hearthrug or in the sun, in pursuit of a comfortable posture? Just in that manner have I rotated over this story. Over and over again in my mind have I been turning it, trying to find out how it ought to be told. It is as queer a yarn in my opinion as any man ever had to relate; and an artist, I have no doubt, would make a first-rate job of it. But I, who had all that I learnt at school washed out of me at sea, where the Latin grammar, the Greek alphabet and the like, were jettisoned to make way for a very different sort of intellectual cargo—I say, how should I be expected to know anything about art?

After many mental revolutions I have arrived at this determination—to make a kind of log of it, and to spin the whole yarn as though a company of sailors were sitting round me, pipes in hand, and I was talking to them. The story will go to windward better in that form than in any other; and as a log-book is the last sort of volume you would look into for elevated writing, and as the mariner's lingo has never been famous for polish and sweetness, so my choice comforts me with the reflection that it will save me the pains of reading through the poets for elegant ideas, and wading through the dictionary for fine words.

My name is Jack Seymour, and in such-and-such a year I was five-and-twenty years old. Were yarns of this kind embellished with cuts I might save myself a troublesome spell of description by handing the printers a portrait of myself as I was in those days. Five feet ten inches my height was, and though I had knocked off the sea, after seven and a half years of it, in eighteen hundred and something odd, old ocean had left such an impress on me that I looked as much a sailor after three years of shore-going life as ever I did in the jumper of an apprentice, riding down a topgallant stay, or in the blue serge or pilot-cloth of a second mate, stumping the weather-side of the quarter-deck.

It takes a sailor a long time to straighten his spine and get quit of the bold sheer that earns him the name of shell-back. That is not all. Lobscouse eats into the system; salt-horse works out of the pores and contributes to that complexion of mahogany which is often mistakenly attributed to rum and weather; and I have been shipmates with a man who grew white-haired at thirty on soup and bully.

Why will mammas let their little boys go to sea? It is not only that it is the hardest life in the world; when once you are a sailor you are always a sailor, and the calling sticks to you as the rings and bracelets do which are pricked upon your wrists and fingers; so that should you ever happen to fall in love with a girl who does not much care about sailors, but who likes soldiers, and could like you were you a soldier, you are forced in spite of yourself to go on looking like a sailor, though you may have quitted the sea for years, and would enlist to-morrow if the beauty commanded you to do so.

I ceased to be a nautical man when my father died. I was then second mate of the vessel in which I took my last voyage, with a chief mate's certificate, and had little doubt of obtaining a chief mate's berth next time. But on my arrival in London from China, after a voyage that had carried me round the world twice, I learnt that my poor father was dead, and had left me all he had, barring his furniture, which he had willed to some relative who lived in the north of England, though I had never heard of her before, and do not even now know in what manner she was connected with my father.

He died a comparatively poor man, owing to his living up to his earnings as a solicitor; and all that I stepped into was two hundred and fifty pounds a year—or thereabouts; between ourselves, I may say it was a few pounds short of that figure. But it was an estate to me who was absolutely alone in the world, being an

only child, and my mother having died many years before this story starts. At all events, I reckoned the income—the capital was well invested—large enough to justify me in heaving my profession overboard and setting up for myself as a gentleman ashore.

Accordingly I hired a furnished bedroom and sitting-room in the West End of London, paid a small subscription, and became a member of a little club, which brought me acquainted with a number of very good fellows, so that I had companions enough. And for a year or two this sort of life suited me very well. It was an immense escape from the old servitude of the sea; I was my own master, could do what I pleased, go where I liked, was responsible to no man; and I was never tired of thinking of my liberty and enjoying it.

But I am bound to say that, as time crept on, I began to consider that I had no business to be loafing about the West End of London. There was enough money, perhaps, in two hundred and fifty pounds a year—to give the income a square sound—to enable me to take life on the condition of dining for three-and-sixpence, of cheapening the obligation of smoking by a judicious admixture of pipes with cigars, of attending a play or an opera when a ticket for it was given me, and even going to a dance, at long intervals, at some houses which were very hospitably open to me.

But when two years of this easy, idle life had passed, reflections would steal in. I began to think my income small, and that I should find it smaller as I grew older; for though a youngster possessed of two hundred and fifty pounds a year may be thought pretty well off, an old or middle-aged man cuts but a poor figure on that sum. No thoughts of marriage had ever entered my head; not only because I liked being lord of myself, which I certainly found no great heritage of woe (possibly because I never underwent the labour of putting my hair in curl-papers), but because I had never met with any girl I could fall in love with.

And here let me say that I cannot recall this period of my life without a disposition to drop on my knees and give thanks for my salvation from the fate that too often befalls idle young men on small incomes in London and other parts. For I protest that nothing stood between me and a dark destiny in the shape of a ballet-girl or a barmaid, but a tolerable stock of good sense and a natural aversion from anything vulgar or commonplace in woman. What hand was there to save me had I chosen to lounge about bars and suck the nob of my stick in dreary intimate confab with the curls, and rouge, and wadding of the restaurant or the public-house?

I don't mean to say that barmaids and ballet-girls, and the like, do not make good wives. I have no doubt they try their best; but what can they do with their vulgarity? How are they to deal with a certain letter which *will* recur in conversation like a circumstance over which they have no control? I am thankful for being saved from marrying a lady of this pattern, because I can conceive of no domestic condition more truly frightful than that of having a wife of which one is ashamed, whose conversation in company causes all hands acute suffering, and who is one of the reasons why one's friends pity and despise one. I once sat near a knight, who was also a member of Parliament, at a table full of ladies and gentlemen. The knight's wife sat over against us; she had a kind face, but was a most illiterate woman, yet had been a good match for the knight when he developed from an errand-boy into a porter. He had made his fortune, had educated himself, was a great man and a fine man, with a strong voice and an imposing bow; he was an Irishman, and spoke of 'me colleague the mimber for Bally-whack;' and opposite sat his wife, on whom he had to keep scowling to remind her that she was there on the condition that she did not spake. Who would be in such a position as that Irish knight was? Fancy having to dragoon a wife, not for her morals, but lest she should open her mouth and say 'ouse for house, and so forth! Hence, when I think of my life in London after I gave up the sea down to the time when this yarn properly opens, when I consider the several opportunities afforded me of giving my name to a fifth-rate actress, a music-hall singer, a stout, pale and golden beauty who drew beer behind a luncheon-bar, and two or three others whose vocations I cannot just now recollect, I declare I am ready to prostrate myself with gratitude over my escape.

Well, I will say no more about this, and belay any further reference to my growing sensitiveness on the subject of idleness, and the enlarging conviction that if ever I was to end as a man qualified to enjoy life without perpetually overhauling his purse to see if there were a few shillings in it to spare, I must turn to and discover some method of getting money whilst I was young and my health and spirits good. Enough for the purpose of these loggings if I say that in the summer of the year 18— I found myself at Clifton, near Bristol, the guest of an uncle, of whose existence I had indeed heard, though I had never before set eyes on him, and my meeting with whom was so odd and unexpected that I am bound to tell you the story of it.

CHAPTER II.

MY UNCLE SEYMOUR.

I WAS standing at the window of my lodgings, near Regent Street, smoking a cigar and watching the people pass. It was a very hot day; not a dog trotted by but had half a fathom of tongue hanging from its jaws; and the heat gave an edge to the peculiar smell of flue and ancient cookery that haunts the atmosphere of every London lodging-house. In short, it was just a day to set a man dreaming of the country, of shady nooks under cool trees crowded with twinkling leaves, bees making a homelike music in the sunshine beyond, and a smell of wildflowers around; or better still, of the sea-shore, the lip, lipping, and fountain-like seething of the tide on the brown sand, a mild breeze, warm as a woman's breath, blowing across the azure water with enough of strength in it to keep the pools among the rocks trembling.

Nothing could be pleasanter than such thoughts, and whilst I stood turning them over and resolving in a mechanical sort of way to up keeleg and make a stretch for the coast—no matter where—there comes a cab along the street, stops under my window, and presently a servant bundles into the room to tell me that a gentleman wishes to see Mr. Seymour.

He was close behind the girl, and before I could ask his name she stepped aside and he walked in. He looked at me very hard, and said, 'Is your name John Sutherland Seymour?'

I bowed.

'Son of Thomas Sutherland Seymour, solicitor of ———,' naming the address.

I bowed again, wondering who he was and what his business could be. He was about fifty-five years old—perhaps more—had a strong, reddish beard, heavy eyebrows, and small merry blue eyes. He had spoken my name with a slight Yankee drawl in his voice, but his appearance was that of an Australian—to my fancy, at least; perhaps because when I was in Australia I had seen men go dressed as he was, in blue check shirt and collar, blue serge trousers, white waistcoat, cloth coat, square-toed boots, and a large, soft, flapping wideawake.

'John Sutherland Seymour—probably Jack Seymour?' he repeated; and I said 'Yes, sir; Jack Seymour, that's my name.'

'Seymour is my name, too,' said he. 'Can't you guess who I am?'

I stared, trying to think.

'Have I been all my life carrying the family nose about to no purpose?' he cried. 'What is the use of the genuine Roman run, the Seymour rise; what sailors would call the kink amidships if it fails to convict me as a relation?' And so saying he struck an attitude in profile with his forefinger against his nose.

'Is it possible that you are my uncle, Charles Seymour?' I exclaimed.

'More than possible if you are Tom Seymour's son?' he answered; and coming up to me he grasped me by the hand, nearly shook my arm off, and then, pitching his hat and stick on to a sofa, plumped himself into a chair.

I welcomed him with as much heartiness as surprise would let me put into my manner, endeavouring meanwhile to recollect what I had heard about him from my father; how in his youth he had been packed off to sea as a scapegrace; how he had run away from his ship in some China port, and was heard of five years later as doing pretty well in New York; how, very much later yet, news of him reached my father from Canada through a gentleman who reported that he was making money fast. He had never written, and had been as dead to his family as if he had fallen overboard and gone to the bottom on his first voyage.

After a long and very narrow inspection of me, he said, 'You are not like your dad, Jack!'

'No,' said I, amused to hear him call me Jack.

'D'ye see any family likeness in me?' he asked.

'More than enough to swear by,' I answered.

He ran his eye over the room, turning his head about so as to command a round view, and coming back to me asked if I was married.

'No,' said I laughing, for there is something in this question that will make a single man laugh.

'I might guess so. There are no female hints here, and that pipe,' says he, nodding towards the mantelpiece, 'carries, I calculate, at least six smokes too much in the bowl of it ever to be in the family line. Where does your father live?'

'He is dead,' I replied.

'Dead!' he exclaimed. 'Dead, d'ye say?' he bent his eyes on the ground and tapped with his foot. 'How long has he been dead?'

I told him. He continued looking at the floor with a very grieved and disappointed expression in his face, and then, returning to his first manner, said, 'I hope he died pretty well off?'

'Why, yes,' said I. 'Pretty well off, but not better than pretty well.'

'Is your mother living?'

'No.'

'So you're alone?'

I nodded. He took another look round the room, and said, 'You have all that my brother Tom left, I presume?'

'Pretty nearly all,' I answered, tickled by his Yankee curiosity, though he asked his questions with so much good nature and sympathy in his voice and manner that it was impossible to resent them.

'What might that be, sir?'

'A trifle short of two hundred and fifty pounds a year.'

'Ah!' he exclaimed, pulling a chair to him, and resting one leg upon it. 'Time was when I always reckoned Tom would beat me. He had ten times my brains and fifty times my ballast. He would be going to windward with his spars erect and his spanker-boom amidships when I was on my beam ends, points off my course, and sagging like a billy-boy to leeward. You'll excuse my nautical similes, nephew. They are not always intelligible, but I am fond of going to the ocean for my ideas.'

'Head as you please in that way,' said I, laughing. 'You'll find me close in your wake.'

'Oh, then you understand something about the sea, do ye?' says he.

'As much as seven and a half years of sailorising could teach me.'

'Damme!' he burst out, 'if I didn't think so right away off when I first looked at you. But you're not at sea now—you're no longer a sailor, are you?'

'No. I gave up that life when my father died. What man worth five pounds a week would keep at sea as a sailor?'

'Ay, abuse it! abuse it, my lad,' he shouted. 'I'm your man to follow every syllable with breathless enjoyment. Oh for the privilege of spread-eagling the rogues who write books about the nautical life, and make it appear a pleasant calling. Have they dwelt with the sailor in his fore-castle? have they ever spent two hours in passing a lee-earing, as flexible as a bar of iron, in a gale of wind full of ice and the water washing as high as the lee coamings of the main-hatch? can they show figure-heads mutilated like ours by weather that ranges from the roasting calm of the equator to the hissing snow-whirls and shrieking hurricanes of the Horn?'

He pulled a handful of cigars out of his side pocket, put one into his mouth, and handed the others to me.

'Mind,' he continued, flourishing his cigar, lowering his voice, knitting his shaggy brows and speaking with tragic solemnity, 'I do not mean that the wonderful, ay, Jack, the thrilling magic of the ocean that drew me as a boy ——'

'I always understood you were sent there,' I interrupted. ——'to its moaning, storm-laden heart,' he continued, slightly cocking his right eye at me, but taking no further notice of my remark, 'has vanished from my sympathy and love. Davy forbid! Man! I never hear the sullen thunder of breakers upon the shore, I never look forth upon the mighty grey or violet or silvery blue shadow that leans its sweeping line against the haze of the distant heaven, I never watch the majestic procession of its towering combers rolling into snow as they run roaring after one another in the wake of the rushing and living storm, without a leaping up of the spirit—an intoxicating sense of being about six years old—a feeling, I will say, of triumphant gladness, as though in the mere presence and voice of the glorious ocean there was something to deepen and sweeten life at its inmost sources, and to purify and ennoble the spiritual part of me and of you and of every other living human creature whose forehead does not slope into idiocy, with inspirations which come very near to being revelations.'

He watched me with an amused face, as if he should say, 'Come, my young relative, did you think I could only talk slang through my nose? What d'ye say to this as a sample of my parts?'

'How long have you been in England?' I asked, hardly knowing what to make of this singular and certainly striking compound that was sitting and smoking before me, and calling itself my uncle.

'Near upon eighteen months.'

'And when do you return?'

'Return!—where?'

'Where you come from,' said I.

'When I die,' he answered. 'I'm here for the remainder of my natural life, and let me hope that your British customs will let it keep natural. Yes, siree, I'm here to fix. I have a house at Clifton, near Bristol, close to the Gorge—d'ye know the Gorge?—something to save one many a journey out of this shallow little kingdom, as I never look down into it without reckoning myself abroad in a nation of real scenery. In my house, Jack, you'll find an aunt

and two cousins, who'll be heartily glad to make the acquaintance of so fine and manly a beauty as you, and who'll like you none the worse for knowing what the smell of tar resembles.'

I thanked him.

'When can you come?'

'Will next Monday do?' said I.

'To-day will do better. There is a fast train at six. We can meet at Paddington and travel together. How long d'ye need to pack up your silver buckles and pomatum?'

Now, that day would have suited me as well any other. I had nothing to do, and was eager to get out of the sickening, sweltering atmosphere of London. But my dignity was worth something too. It would not do to jump too eagerly into the arms of this uncle and his family. Let them talk of me a little, thought I, before I heave in view, that I may get some kind of importance out of their curiosity. So I said I should not be able to leave London before Monday, on which my uncle answered, 'All right. Suit yourself. We'll look out for you on Monday,' and gave me his address on a card.

I inquired how he had managed to find out where I lived.

'I'll tell you,' said he; and he began a long story of how some months ago he took a directory and hunted through it for my father's address; how he noticed that there were three Thomas Seymours (without the Sutherland), on whom he called, but found none of them the man he wanted; how he worked his way down through older directories until he came across Thomas Sutherland Seymour, solicitor, such and such a street.

'This,' said he, 'I reckoned to be my brother; but when I called at the office the clerks there treated me as if I had come to make fools of them. They knew nothing of Thomas Sutherland Seymour. To cut this yarn short, time passed, and I came to the conclusion that if my brother was alive it was not the will of heaven that I should find him. My wife said, "It serves you right. You never wrote to him, and now that you are anxious to see a family face again, fate steps in, takes a hitch over a belaying pin with the hauling part of your wishes, and stops the tackle from travelling." Those,' continued he, after a little pause, during which time he had slyly watched the face of astonishment I had put on on hearing that I had an aunt who could talk in that fashion, 'were not exactly her words, but that is no doubt what she meant. Well, yesterday I came up from Bristol, and in the railway carriage met a young man, and got into talk with him. One thing led to another. I spoke of my brother, of the bigness

of the world when you want to discover a man and its littleness when you don't want a man to discover you. "What's your brother's name?" asked the young gentleman. I told him. "What was he?" said he. "A solicitor," says I. "Well," said he, "I know a young fellow named John Sutherland Seymour, and think I have heard him say his father was a lawyer. I don't know his private address, but he belongs to a club I am member of, and if you care to call I have no doubt the porter will be able to tell you where he lives." That's how I found you out, sir.'

'Stranger things have happened than that,' said I, 'and yet it is extraordinary enough that you should have met with a man able to cast off the hauling part of your wishes, and so prove himself stronger than fate.'

'Similes of that kind recall your old life, hey, Jack? Is that why you drag up the words again and fondle 'em?' He came to the window for air, and said, 'Are you in business? do you do anything? are you getting money in any fashion?'

'No,' I replied; 'I am an idle man, and I'm trying to find out whether I ought to be ashamed of being idle. I'm afraid the sea has unfitted me for business. I am in hope of cultivating some promptings in that direction, though upon my honour I doubt if I have a single quality that would be of the least use to me in any shore-going capacity.'

'That's very likely,' said my uncle. 'But what do you want with business? Haven't you enough to live on?'

'Why, perhaps I have. But don't you see,' said I, slightly warmed by observing that he had not helped me in the smallest degree in my apology for doing nothing and being nothing, 'that I want to excuse myself for my idleness, which should satisfy you that I do not think idleness good?'

'What made you give up the sea?' he asked, laughing behind his beard.

'Didn't I explain, sir? I said it was having an income left me. Nor was that all. You have been to sea and know what the life is. Who would be a slave? Yet I was when at sea, as all sailors are, running here and there to other people's orders, pulling and hauling, furling, reefing, and greasing, choked with doughboys and hishee-hashee, snatching at sleep and catching a wink as a man on a yard-arm might try to grasp a booby, and managing to come off with a feather out of the fowl's tail.'

'Ay,' cried my uncle, grinning extravagantly, 'and let us hear what shape the slush-pot has, and how the head-pump is rigged, and how a man feels who is one of a short-handed crew when all

hands are called! Oh, the happiness of passing a week with the galley-fire washed out, nothing but frost and sleet and wind on deck, and water and darkness and streaming togs below, weevils in the bread-barge, rats in the mess-kids, and the scuttle-butt smelling as sweet as the Thames off the Isle of Dogs; a temperance ship where all the lush is aft; a shoddy ship whose owners fall distracted and tear their hair and gnash their teeth every time the old sieve is reported still afloat and in league with the underwriters!

Then, looking at me very gravely, 'Pray, young man,' says he, 'where did you get your gab from? Not from my brother Tom?'

'I must have got it from you,' I replied; 'it is evidently in the family.'

'Well,' says he, 'all that I can say is, a young fellow who can talk as you do ought to find life larger than the West End of London. How do you pass your days?'

'I knock about,' I answered, laughing heartily, for there was something so funny in his manner that it was like talking to a comedian.

'Why don't you get married? If I were your age and had all the world before me, I'd view marriage as an industry, and start in business as a husband. Make no mistake, Jack. There are some decent pickings to be found in that calling.' He saved me from replying by pulling out his watch and exclaiming, 'I have an appointment at four. I'm sorry you can't manage to meet me at Paddington. But we shall see you on Monday?'

'Without fail, sir, all being well.'

He laid hold of my hand, and viewing me earnestly said, with a singular kindness and gravity of voice and manner, 'Jack, I'm glad to have found you—glad to have met my brother's laddie. Old memories rise whilst I talk and see you standing up in front of me, a big man. Think of Tom having been dead three years! It makes me feel as if a century had passed since I was a boy. I ought to have written to him—I ought to have made myself heard of—there's much I should have done. But see here, Jack. God's peace be with him! d'ye know it was he who would chime in with your grandfather against me; tell the old man that the sea was the only fit place for such a rascalion as I—for such a skylarking son of a gun who was always kissing the servant girls, running into debt with landlords, and coming home with dancing eyes and light heels at one o'clock in the morning? He was right and the old man was right; but I'll tell you a big truth,

Jack. It's possible for folks to be right and to be wrong too. Man alive! I was not a rascal, but a loose human arrangement with the makings of a fellow-creature in me; an unravelled rope whose strands wanted twisting up and whose end wanted *whipping*; and when I came to be a man, got a bit of money, married and passed into what ye might call a municipal entity—a thing interested in rates, drainage, and fellow-townsmen—the bile would rise in my gorge when I thought of Thomas and home, and I never could bring myself to hold out my hand in a letter. It was a traditional prejudice, but I left it t'other side the water when I sailed with the wife and the girls for the old country. Another day you shall tell me where my brother rests. Meanwhile, God bless ye, and—and don't fail us on Monday next.'

So saying he pulled on his wideawake, grasped his stick and scuttled out of the room, trotting downstairs so nimbly as to defy my efforts to pass him in order to be first with the hall door.

CHAPTER III.

I GO TO CLIFTON.

THIS conversation with my uncle took place before my story properly opens, and if I were an artist, perhaps I should leave it out for that reason; but apart from its being as good as a joke, and showing besides how it happened that I went on a visit to Clifton, it enables me to tell you in a pleasing manner a good deal about myself, and likewise it explains who my uncle was, and why he was a stranger to me.

You may talk as you please about the beauty of foreign parts. I've seen some grand shows in that way in my time, as what sailor has not? But had I never viewed anything finer than Clifton—that part of it, I mean, which they call the Gorge—I should still be able to boast of having beheld as lovely a bit of nature as any part of the world has to offer. What fixes it in my memory was the sunset. I had tumbled into an open fly—quite a genteel turn-out—along with my portmanteau, and when we had climbed a steep hill and had got on top of it and rolled along some distance, I stood up and saw a sky full of the magnificence of a score of glorious colours, against which the heavy foliage and green heights which tower above the valley, in whose heart the silver Avon (at flood-tide, mind you) winds like a stream of mercury, stood out dark, massive, dense, the gold of the sky trembling

among the fibrine fringe of the wooded acclivities; and layers or folds of emerald, sapphire, rose, scarlet like incandescent iron, sunbright effulgence like that of molten steel in a retort swept by the hurricane of a steam-crested blast, stretching their most beautiful lengths along until their extremities faded in the black vapour of a huge cloud, from whose sooty, stooping belly green sparks of lightning were crackling and glittering, whilst the thunder moaned like the voice of a lion heard roaring in pain in some distant resonant forest.

The house abreast of which the driver hove his horse to was a small mansion with about an acre of ground in front of it full of flowers, high trees, a fountain, and so forth. A man-servant in a black suit and white necktie opened the door, and I marched in, but was scarcely entered when my uncle, rushing along, received me with a shout of welcome, and dragged me, travel-stained as I was, into a large and exceedingly elegant drawing-room.

There were four ladies there, one middle-aged, the others young, one of these a caller, as I supposed, with a small, fat, very old dog, sleek as a rat, at her feet. This tottering creature bared its teeth as we entered, and delivered a few strange wheezy notes, on which the young lady cried 'Down, you silly dog! hush, you foolish old Flora!' and in the midst of this my uncle introduced me.

The middle-aged lady was my aunt, a tall woman, still handsome, with plenty of black hair, dark eyes, a fine figure, and wearing what women call 'a train,' so long that the end of it remained at her chair after she had risen and advanced some paces to meet and welcome me. Two of the others were my cousins, both of them plump, fair girls, not pretty, but with very kind faces and pleasant smiles. I liked their manners amazingly—I mean I heartily relished the way in which they received me; no affectation, no hanging back, no smirking, and yet there was a pretty modesty in their air, too.

But the third young lady! My uncle on introducing me to her had called her Miss Hawke, and I learnt what her Christian name was by one of my cousins saying, 'Don't mind her, Florence dear,' when her dog barked, and she rebuked the infirm old beast. Florence Hawke, then, was her name, and when you get deeper into this book, which you are bound to do, for a stranger yarn you never read in your life, you'll understand why I have it so pat and am able to write it down without scratching the back of my head and looking aloft for the words.

How am I to describe her? Mate³, on the honour of a gentle-

man who would not tell a lie to gratify the conceit of the finest woman living, I swear that in my opinion Florence Hawke was the sweetest little creature at that or any other time to be found in this country. And why do I call her little? Faith, she was not so little either. When we stood side by side the top of her sunny aromatic head was on a level with my ear. But little, somehow, is the adjective that will come shoving into my thoughts when I speak of her, because, perhaps, of the winning simplicity of her manner, the childlike earnestness of her, her pretty delightful ways, which had a certain charming babyishness about them.

I say, how am I to describe her? If all the colours the very royallest academician now living knows how to mix would fail—as don't I know they would?—to give you the exquisite delicate bloom on her cheeks, the velvet, pearly whiteness of her ears, throat, forehead, the rich brown and gold of her plentiful, beautiful hair, the sweet clear carving of her nostrils and brow, the dark yet luminous gray of her large eyes, oh! not to mention the *soul* in them, the flashing spirit of intelligence, the magic play of emotion, what am I to do with ink? What am I to make of such perfections when I have no better brush in my hand than a pen to paint them with? And yet, though it is more than twenty years ago, I see her as she turned to bow and smile, when my uncle introduced me, as plainly now as I did then—the very pretty hat, the long black feather tenderly coiling over the back of her hair towards her neck as if to kiss it, the plaid dress—no, not plaid, check I mean, small black and white bars crossing, the material silk, would it be?—fitting her like the glove upon her hand, and expressing without emphasising (as every good dress-maker knows how) just the type of figure a man's eye loves to dwell on; a really beautiful shape with a perfectly proportioned waist, not one of those hiatuses in the meaning of the female body which bequeaths all the sense that ought to be amidsthips to the hips. Yes, I see her now as I saw her then, and yet I cannot describe her. A great pity, for on my word of honour she was the sweetest woman living, and ought to be handled by an artist instead of a shell-back still smelling of the pitch-kettle.

Well, the talk, of course, would be mere commonplace at this start. My aunt expressed her joy at her husband having found me out; she was delighted to see me; did I know Clifton? she was sure I should be charmed with the scenery, and so on. And then my uncle burst forth: 'Come, Jack, let me show you your room. We dine at eight, which is an hour later than usual,' and we went upstairs.

If my visit were going to make any lengthened portion of this story, I should be tempted to write a page or two about this house in which I found my uncle and his family living, for nothing completer and better in its way have I ever seen. I admired everything as I went upstairs, my uncle showing the road with a delighted face—the fine stone staircase, the conservatories, the decorations, and the like—until we came to a large bedroom lighted by a number of candles, as handsome a room as a king's guest could expect, and, in this country, perhaps a better than he would get, with an open window looking on to the front grounds, which lay dark in the shadow of the twilight, a hundred sweet scents floating up out of them on the dew-laden folds of air that stirred softly. The stars were dropping into their places, a faint haze of crimson lingered in the west, and now and again the sky was tinged with the delicate violet glare of lightning; and pretty amid the stillness was the tinkling music played by the fountain.

'After London,' said I, 'this is indeed delightful!'

'Well, my boy, you are heartily welcome—most heartily welcome,' exclaimed my uncle, clapping me on the shoulder. 'Don't trouble to dress for dinner; we're very homely—at least I am, and hate any kind of fuss.'

He then went away, and shortly afterwards I followed him to the drawing-room, where I found all the family but my cousin Amelia, Miss Hawke, as I supposed, having left. I took a seat near my aunt, and was about to tell her how surprised I had been by her husband's visit, when something under my chair touched my leg. I hopped up, and on looking perceived that it was Miss Hawke's old terrier.

'What did you think, Jack—that it was a rat?' cried my uncle, laughing at the manner in which I had whipped on to my feet.

'Isn't it Miss Hawke's dog?' said I.

'Yes,' replied my aunt; 'we have induced her to stay and dine with us.'

'Not the dog, but Miss Hawke, Jack,' said my uncle.

'Don't you think her very pretty, Mr. Seymour?' said my Cousin Sophie.

'Mr. Seymour!' shouted my uncle; 'whoever heard a girl call her cousin mister before? My dear Sophie, yonder young fellow is your Cousin Jack; pray call him so, and make him feel that he is with relatives.'

'Ay, please do,' said I.

She blushed and laughed and said, 'Very well, I will call you Jack.'

'Yes, Sophie,' I replied, plumping out her name, 'I do think Miss Hawke very pretty—wonderfully pretty.'

'You're right, nephew,' said my uncle; 'in all my travels I never came across anything sweeter—the object of my earliest affections alone excepted,' giving his wife a bow.

'She's an Australian,' said my aunt.

'Indeed!' I exclaimed, though why I should have said 'Indeed!' in a tone of surprise I really do not know, for is not Australia as rich in pretty women as any other country or continent—allowing for numbers?

'Yes,' said my aunt; 'she was born in Australia. Her father made his money out there, and we believe he is a very rich man. He lives in a fine house a short walk from here.'

'I made his acquaintance in a journey to London,' said my uncle. 'His Christian name is Alphonso, and I have heard Florence talk of one Damaris Hawke, an aunt who lives in Australia. What d'ye think, Jack, of Alphonso and Damaris as a pair of names for a small tea party? He's a pompous old chap—between you and me, a bit of a prig—with strong aristocratic leanings; man, you should see his crest! Yet, in spite of my democratic wide-awake and the republican cut of my jib,' said he, looking down at his clothes, which were of the same pattern as those he had worn when he called upon me, 'he was pleased to exchange cards, and on his return from town called with his daughter.'

'What I like most in Florence Hawke,' said Sophie, 'is her unaffectedness. She is very pretty, she will no doubt be very rich, but she is quite unspoiled, and as artless and simple as a little girl.'

'She will of course have many admirers,' said I.

'She might have, you may take your affidavit,' answered my uncle, 'but her father's a taut hand, my girls say, and nobody dare go near. What's the name of the youngster, Sophia, old Hawke is tacking to fetch?'

'Reginald Morecombe,' replied my aunt. 'His father is a baronet, and Mr. Reginald will get the title. There's something I do not much like in views of that kind in parents. I have only met Mr. Morecombe once, but once was enough to discover that he is a very simpering young man, rather conceited, very much given to boasting about what he and Mr. Hawke call blood, and

quite capable, no doubt, of believing that he would be doing this beautiful girl much honour by taking her papa's money in exchange for his name.'

'Self-made Australians are generally fond of titles,' said Sophie.

'We're all fond of titles,' said I. 'I for one should be well pleased to be a lord; not because I value the rank, but because I value the world's valuation of it.'

'In my opinion,' observed my aunt, 'the very worst man a girl can have for a husband is a fool.'

'Quite right,' said my uncle; 'a woman can never get lower than that.'

'But Florence has to marry Mr. Morecombe first, mamma,' said Sophie.

At this point of a conversation that was both interesting and instructive Miss Hawke and Amelia came in. Amelia was stouter, let me say fatter, than Sophie; she had three chins and a bust as plump as the bows of a galliot. I doubt if Miss Hawke could have chosen a better contrast for her own delightful shape, and as they entered and crossed the room side by side, I not only found my eyes rivetted to the beautiful face of this young Australian lady, and my head rotating after her, as you may see a little metal duck in a basin of water follow a magnet, but I was surprised by a queer fluttering sensation under my waistcoat; a feeling as if my heart had got out of gear and were rolling about on a groundswell of emotion.

However, no time was allowed me to consider what this might mean. Scarcely had the young ladies entered when the manservant was seen standing in the door, exclaiming that dinner was ready. We trooped into the dining-room, my aunt on my arm and Miss Hawke on my uncle's, and took our seats. Here was another fine apartment, with large portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Seymour facing each other, and the soft light of wax candles and sperm oil to dine by. Miss Hawke sat opposite me, just clear of the flowers in the centre of the table, so that I had her full in sight throughout the dinner. I will not say that she looked more bewitching without her hat; let her go dressed as she chose she would have been fascinating—upon my word, even my uncle's wide-awake would have become her! But if she did not look more bewitching, she was not less so now that her hair was exposed, with its dainty little parting on the left side vanishing amid a soft mass of clustering fluffy silken locks on her white forehead, and coils of thick plaits

crowning her, and a rose—a small newly-blown rose—glimmering like a jewel among those most lovely folds.

For the first time that ever I can remember I felt nervous in the presence of a lady—yes, this girl sitting opposite to me, and bringing from time to time the whole broadside of her beauty and intelligence to bear by letting her eyes rest on me with a kind of inquiry in them, as if she were quietly taking stock of the young sailorified chap fronting her, and wondering if he was really a nautical man, and if not, what business he had in seeming one; I say, that at the start Miss Florence Hawke made me feel as shy as a schoolboy at an evening party. Positively, at one moment I was so nervous that I did not dare lift a glass of wine for fear of spilling it over what a tailor would call my continuations.

Fortunately for me, however, my uncle talked incessantly, so that what with having to listen to him, and what with having to attend to what the servants put before them, the others were too busy to notice my manner. At all events, I thought so, and that helped me greatly in working myself on to a level keel again.

All the conversation at the going off was about my father, about my uncle's discovery of me, and so forth.

'How nice it must be, Mr. Seymour, to meet with relations unexpectedly!' said Miss Hawke to me.

'Yes,' I stammered, 'very nice indeed—at least, I mean, it depends.' And here, seeing that I bade fair to make an ass of myself, I laid hold of my nerves and said, 'When I say depends, I should explain, Miss Hawke, that relations unexpectedly met are not always nice. As an instance, imagine a man addressing a room full of electors; he wants the voters to believe him not only a Tory but a well-connected man. In the midst of his speech a noise is heard, and a woman, disguised in liquor, with a bonnet on her back, shoves through the door, saying, "I have a right to be here; he is my brother!"'

This produced a laugh, and reminded my uncle of an anecdote, the telling of which took the conversation off the course it had been steering, for which I was grateful, as I was nervous and apt on such a topic as relations to be *gauche*, and even offensive, without meaning it. My aunt now asked me questions about myself—how long had I been at sea? what induced me to abandon it? what parts of the world I had sailed into? My answers were listened to with great attention; indeed, my two cousins took a most flattering interest in me, and by a kind of sisterly sympathy of smile and look—I do not know how else to describe a manner that was immediately and pleasantly sensible to me—made me

feel, long before we had finished dinner, that I had known them since they were children.

I saw Miss Hawke round her lovely eyes when I talked of the sea, and mentioned having been to Sydney, New South Wales.

'What did you think of the bay?' she asked. 'Is it not lovely? I was born in Sydney; but it is not because that town is my native place that I consider its bay must be the beautifullest scene in the world.'

'It *is* beautiful,' I exclaimed warmly, excited into enthusiasm by her advocacy. Had she praised the kangaroo for its graceful movements, I should have sworn that the capers of a Taglioni or a Vestris were not a patch upon the poetical motions of that animal. 'Do you know it, uncle?'

'Well,' answered he, 'it is very fine, but it don't come up to Rio.'

'Oh, yes, it does,' said I. 'Miss Hawke, be quite easy; Sydney Bay tops the whole world's scenery for beauty.'

My uncle laughed, and so did my aunt, and I saw my cousins exchange a faint smile, all which made me suppose that something more was to be seen in my manner than I had any idea was visible or even existing. I cast my eyes down and revolved a wine-glass on the table, whilst my uncle asked Miss Hawke if she liked sailors.

Miss Hawke. Very much indeed.

My Uncle. That's brave. Whenever I recall my old profession I love to believe that the ladies like sailors.

Sophie. Sailors are so unconventional; I always think them the best society in the world, for that reason. There is no nonsense, no hunting about for compliments and neat sayings. What they feel they say. And then their conversation is full of colour, for they are always travelling and seeing something new. I *like* sailors. (With emphasis.)

Amelia. So do I.

Myself. I wish I were still at sea; I should be able to bow to all this.

My Uncle. I saw, nephew, what d'ye think of Sophie's idea of Jack's talk being full of colour? (Here he tipped me a wink.) Is it full of colour when the scuttle is thumped in a gale of wind to the roar of 'All hands! Tumble up, my lively hearties! Don't wait to shave!'

Miss Hawke (laughing). I have heard that cry of 'All hands!' What a pity there is no short cut to Australia! Cape Horn is very dreadful! Coming to England this time we nearly ran into an iceberg in a snow-storm.

My Aunt (clasping her hands). Just think if you had run into it!

Myself. How often have you made the voyage, Miss Hawke?

Miss Hawke. Twice.

Myself. Are you likely to return to Australia?

Miss Hawke. I think not. I cannot say. Papa will certainly never return to stop there. He prefers England.

My Uncle. And you?

Miss Hawke. I like Clifton; but I wish we could get the Australian climate here. It is always either too hot or too cold.

Myself. Do not you prefer London to the country?

Miss Hawke. No; and papa hates London.

My Uncle. And so do I. Life is too stiff in London. Here, if I wear a wide-awake nobody takes any notice; in London people stare as if I were a patriot. And look, Miss Florence, how easily and pleasantly one forms acquaintances and makes friends in the country. We have not been here very long and already we know many persons, and one delightful lady (bowing to her), who kindly takes us as we are, dispenses with all the formalities which would hedge her about in London, and make her charming society a luxury to be obtained only at long intervals.

My Aunt (speaking doubtfully). I should not very much care to live in London. The society that is worth having is very difficult to get.

My Uncle. And when got, not worth having.

Miss Hawke. Papa likes ceremony, but I don't. I enjoy unexpected things: an impromptu carpet-dance, dining out as I am now. When you are asked to anything, you anticipate the pleasure of it, and that is why set affairs are often disappointing.

My Uncle. We are unconventional enough. I never could endure any fuss. My wife and I have had to rough it in a country where people who suffer from corns have no business to live; for boots over there are heavy, and folks are given to shoving and stamping. My daughters are like their parents; they take short views and simple ones. Sophie—Amelia—your health, my loves. May you marry men of sense and live for yourselves instead of for your neighbours. (He smiled affectionately at them over a glass of claret.) When do you expect your father back, Miss Florence?

Miss Hawke. To-morrow.

My Aunt. Will he bring Emily with him?

Miss Hawke. Yes; and Mr. Morecombe.

My cousins exchanged looks, and the merest shadow of a

smile flitted over Miss Hawke's sweet mouth as she stole a glance at Sophie. Evidently this Mr. Morecombe was a not wholly unfamiliar topic amongst these three young ladies.

'Don't you feel dull alone in your big house?' asked my uncle.

'No,' she answered; 'I never feel dull. I rather like being alone—sometimes.'

Evidently she has no mother, thought I. By this time my nervousness had worn off, and I could take peeps at her with some degree of confidence. Why did fate place me plump opposite her? I would look from her to the beautiful cluster of flowers in the middle of the table, and from them to her, until the most exquisite of God's works—a lovely woman's face and the shining tints and sweet forms of flowers and foliage—were combined in one impression; so that never after could I think of her without associating her image with the white and violet and purple petals which filled the room with a fragrance that seemed to me as the breath from her delicate lips.

But, you tarpaulin, you! This is *too* fine! This is the mere ecstasy of parish chatter! Was I in love with her *then* that I should write down all this aromatic stuff in *this* place? Alas! What do I know? Put me on my oath and I will say—Yes! I *was* in love; my peace of mind was gone! I had met my fate, and sat beholding it with a thumping heart.

By-and-by the ladies left the room, and a box of cigars was put upon the table. My uncle opened the tall folding windows, through which you could step on to the lawn, and we stood together to get the air, smoking and looking at the night. There was a small moon behind the house, the sky was very black and full of stars, far away in the quarter we faced there was a faint play of sheet lightning, scarcely more vivid than the silvery flash of the meteors which broke out from the dark air under the stars and sailed away in a line of spangles; a delicious country silence reigned around, broken only by the distant quick throbbing and rumbling noise of a locomotive dragging a train of carriages, and by the cool plashing of a fountain and by the rich notes of a nightingale piping hard by.

'Can't you understand why I prefer this sort of thing to London?' exclaimed my uncle, speaking through his nose, with the Yankee drawl I had noticed in him when we first met.

'Of course I do,' I replied; 'I would not exchange this for London if I had it.'

'Pompous as old Hawke is, he's not an ass,' continued my uncle. 'He sticks to Clifton, which proves that he has intellect.'

He lives in a finer house than this, though he has not the same extent of ground. We'll go and dine with him some of these nights. He's hospitable enough, but a damned old prig. He wants to get a title into his family and get it he will, though he has to drag it in by the head and ears, and perhaps half murder the poor girl he calls upon to help him.'

'I heard Miss Hawke say that young Mr. Morecombe was coming to-morrow with the old fellow,' said I. 'How long has this been going on?'

'What d'ye mean? How long has young Morecombe been on the *tappy*, as Johnny Crapaud says?'

'Ay.'

'Two or three months, I reckon.'

'Has he proposed?'

'Lord love ye, how do I know? but I should say not. This is fine tobacco, Jack. Real cigars, I call these.'

'Yes,' said I; 'they are very fine indeed. What was Mr. Hawke?'

'Well, I believe he made his money as a squatter. He is quiet about his beginning; possibly he's ashamed of having got money by working for it. I reckon he squatted. There's squatting in his soul; it may be traced in his walk, and followed, as the poets say, in his smile.'

'Have you met his friend, Mr. Morecombe?' said I, trying to make believe that I asked these questions merely for the sake of talking, and that I would just as soon speak of consols, or take his views on the molasses market.

'Once; I dined with him at Hawke's. A puppy, sir; a poor creature with a parting down the middle of its hair and a glass in its eye, and immense stiff stick-up shirt collars. Hawke will not get his daughter to have him, he may be cocksure of that. She is destined for a man, not for a monkey. How social she is! This evening Sophie, who was among the flowers, saw her pass and called her in. And then she stays and dines without requiring any further pressing than a plain "Will you?" That's the sort of friendliness I like in man or woman. And my eye, nephew! What a face, hey? If I were only a quarter of a century younger—if I were only a single man!'

He made several motions with his arms, that by dumbshow he might express the ecstasy his imagination flung him into, then smelt to his cigar and said that he defied any importer in the country to beat that brand.

I felt that he was just one of those men whom a young fellow

could bare his soul to; and nothing prevented me from telling him how desperately impressed I was by Miss Florence Hawke but the consideration that he had daughters of his own. He presently gave me a chance of expressing my admiration of my cousins by speaking of his wife.

'How d'ye like her, Jack?'

'I cannot tell you how much. She is all kindness; and is she not a very clever woman?'

'Well, if a man wears a diamond on his finger there is no reason why he should talk about it as if he were a jeweller,' said he. 'Sophia is my wife: and that fact belays all I should like to say about her. But one thing I'll assert—a realer woman doesn't walk the surface of this globe. There may be women as real, but nothing realer. There are no half-laughs and pursers' grins about *her*. She's straight up and down, both ends of her bolted and clinched in the cast-iron of solid principles. Yes, siree, your aunt's a woman: a Canadian, sir—the daughter of a colony whose females are clippers of the first quality, handsome in make, swift in action, staunch in build, faithful to the hand that steers 'em. And though it's not for me to call your attention to such matters—more particularly as they are perfectly obvious—yet let me suggest that, considering her age, you have probably met younger women, reckoned handsome in their way, without her figure, her taste in dress, and her complexion. Eh?'

I fully agreed and said, 'And your daughters? Have you no word for them? I declare I have never seen kinder faces nor been charmed by gentler and more winning manners.'

'Ay, they are very well, they are very well,' he exclaimed in a soft voice. 'They are good girls. They have sound hearts. I thank God for that. A parent has no right to expect more.'

And whilst we finished our cigars he told me of his early struggles, what a noble helpmate he had in his wife, to whom he had been married five-and-twenty years, and then talked of my father, and asked questions about my mother, who she was, what relatives I had on her side, and so forth. But it was now time to pitch the end of our cigars away and join the ladies, who we found in chairs round the tall open windows, listening to the faint strains of a distant band of music audible on this side of the house only.

'What's that they are blowing?' inquired my uncle.

'It sounds like "God Save the Queen,"' said Sophie.

'Has Australia a national song?' asked my aunt.

'Why, of course—"God Save the Queen," mamma,' said Amelia.

'No, excuse me,' said I; 'the Australian anthem is "Cheer up, Sam."'

'What!' cried my uncle; 'd'ye mean "Cheer up, Sam, don't let your spirits go down?" Is my nephew right, Miss Florence?'

'We put "God Save the Queen" first, I believe,' she answered laughing; 'but everybody in Australia is fond of "Cheer up, Sam!"'

This led to my aunt asking Miss Hawke to sing, to which she consented on condition that Amelia sang first. So my cousin went to the piano and piped in a small blithe note about some merry, merry man who broke an unfortunate girl's heart, and yet continued very merry, *ri fol de lol!* proving what odious rogues merry, merry men are. Then Miss Hawke, after a little hesitation and a timid peep at me with her lovely eyes, took her place and warbled a ballad. I have no recollection of the air; I do not remember that I gathered what the poetry was about; but for all that I considered it the divinest song I had ever heard. Was it some commonplace tune? were the words of the album type—the Letitia Elizabeth Landon and broken heart and dishevelled ringlets school? Very like, very like; but no incomparable Italian artist singing some air of matchless beauty could have overwhelmed me with such emotions as those raised in me by Miss Hawke's simple, pretty voice, the airy, graceful, flower-like pose of her figure, her white hands with a ring or two on them, trembling like blown snow-flakes which glittered with the sparkle of ice-crystals as they moved over the ivory keys, her rich hair taking a ruddy tinge of gold from the soft lamplight, the sweetest of little feet coquetting with the pedals.

I protest, when I think of her I long like Werther to take my flowing locks in both hands and pour out my soul. Dissembling was idle. When more than a man's heart will hold is poured into it, then, like any other vessel—a hook-pot or a washing-tub—it will overflow. I was perfectly sensible that there was a note of something exceedingly like impassioned admiration in the thanks I added to those of the others for her song; but I could not help it. Amelia looked at me, Sophie at her mother, and her mother fanned herself. Miss Hawke said, 'You are too kind, Mr. Seymour, to praise me so warmly; my voice is a very poor one;' whilst my uncle observed, 'I don't know; it looks to me as if Jack had a cultivated taste;' on which I gave a wild laugh.

Miss Hawke then somewhat bashfully asked if *I* would sing. (What! before ladies, thought I. Never!) I told her that my

knowledge of music did not enable me to reach to anything higher than a windlass chorus.

'Then give us one of the old chanteys,' exclaimed my uncle. "'Haul the Bowline," or "Whiskey, Johnny," or "Run, let the Bulljine run." Why, the mere sound of those old songs takes me back forty years, and I seem to be standing in the lee scuppers up to my neck, or holding on with my eyelids as I try to roll up the foreroyal single-handed.'

However, I declined to sing, and they gave up pressing me. Tea was brought in, and we sat with cups and saucers in our hands talking a variety of small beer, until Miss Hawke, pulling a watch of the size of a sixpence from her waistband, said that it was getting late—she must go home; whereupon my uncle said he would walk with her to her house, and half turned to me in a manner that made me hope he was going to ask me to join him; but instead he observed, 'I shan't be above twenty minutes, Jack. Don't go to bed; we'll have a cigar when I return.' Of course I endeavoured to look satisfied and happy, though I would cheerfully have given up smoking for a month for the privilege of helping him to see Miss Hawke home.

Well, presently she came down dressed, looking lovely in the lamplight in her bewitching hat, and said good-night to us, and I saw my uncle lurking in the hall with his wideawake on, and wished him at Jericho for leaving me behind. She left the room, but came back in a moment crying out in her melodious way, 'Oh, I have forgotten Flora! Where's my ducky Flora?'

My uncle whistled, my aunt made a noise like a hen, and my cousins peered about. I looked under the sofa, and found the old creature snuggled up into a ball and snoring like a young negro.

'Here's Flora,' said I, dropping on one knee, meaning to haul the animal out and gallantly place her in her mistress's arms; but the moment I touched the aged beast, that was evidently very deaf, she staggered on to her legs with her tail on end like an ensign staff on a ship's stern, snapped at my hand, and went reeling under the sofa into the room, backing away, and making a most horrible faint barking noise.

'Don't be afraid, Mr. Seymour,' said Miss Hawke; 'she's the sweetest, most harmless, the dearest old thing—aren't you, Flora?' and she took the quivering, grinning, terrified, deaf, asthmatical old brute to her heart, and put her lips to the worn-out skin of the creature's head and fondled it. She then went away for good, giving us all a beautiful smile as she quitted the

room, and I sat down with my aunt and cousins to chat with them until my uncle returned.

CHAPTER IV.

SOME SACRED MUSIC.

I WENT to bed at half-past eleven that night. My aunt, in the most affectionate manner, hoped I would sleep well; my cousins bade me good-night with the kindness of sisters; my uncle accompanied me to my bedroom in order to see that I was properly cared for, and parted from me with every manifestation of cordial pleasure at my presence, begging me to feel completely at home, to do as I pleased, to ask for whatever I wanted, to enjoy myself thoroughly, and to stay as long as ever I chose.

Could mortal uncle say more to a nephew? And what a delightful, fragrant, breezy bedroom was mine! And yet, though I was in bed by twelve, the lights out, not a sound to disturb me outside save it were now and again a moan of night-wind to rustle the flowers under the window and shake their sweetness into the dark, star-laden air, I did not close my eyes in sleep till four o'clock.

No Chancery litigant whose three years' suit is in all probability to end next day; no young actor whose first appearance in London is fixed for the following night; no distracted tradesman with several heavy bills, renewed *ad nauseam*, falling due next morning, could have plunged and rolled upon his mattress more wearily and sleeplessly than I. To say that I was so much in love with Florence Hawke as to be unable to close my eyes through thinking of her would be to say a little too much. If ever a man fell in love at first sight, I did; I'll not deny it. I thought Miss Hawke a beautiful creature, with the manner of a queen and the sweetness of an angel; and I was in love with her, though a few hours before I had never heard of her; I had not the least idea that there was such a person in the world. But I am not going to pretend that I was such an emotional, impressionable, sentimental swab that I could be robbed of my sleep right away out of hand by the first pretty woman I had ever seen, whom I felt I could marry and live happily with ever after.

And yet she was responsible for my sleeplessness, too, for I lay thinking of her until I thought myself into broad wakefulness, though I had gone tired to bed, as a man who may be hungry at

his usual hour for dining finds his appetite gone if the dinner be long delayed. Being of a somewhat imaginative mind, I pictured her as forced by her father into accepting Mr. Morecombe, and I thought of myself as going to the rescue and attacking old Hawke and withering him up with a thousand penetrating and scathing sarcasms, and my humour actually carried me into the imagination of horsewhipping young Morecombe for being rude to me. What wit visits one in bed where it is of no use! What conflicts one has there with one's enemies in the silence of night, and how victorious one always is!

However, I fell asleep at last, and when I was called by a servant was thankful to find that the night was gone and my job of kicking the bed-clothes about done for the time being. There must be something very noxious and nauseous in the London air to make the breezes of the country or the seaside the delights they are to Cockney nostrils. Spite of my night of broken rest, I felt a stone lighter in weight as I moved about the room dressing myself. The atmosphere was delicious: a warm, aromatic tide that hummed pleasantly through the window, and was full of the chanting of bees, radiant with the tossing and blown flight of butterflies, and there was a sound of the throbbing life of Bristol city pulsing in it.

I found my relations in the breakfast-room: not one of those gloomy subterranean chambers so called which you find in London houses, and which are occupied by the blackbeetles when the family are away, but a handsome, cheerful apartment made green and cool by the shadows of some trees which stood close against that side of the house. I was warmly greeted, and answered the kind inquiries as to the night I had passed by saying that when I fell asleep I slept like a top, which was true enough.

'I'll tell you,' said my uncle, 'how you may kill the time here. There is a fast mare in the stable at your disposal whenever you have a mind for a canter. Can you ride?'

'Yes, if there's pommel enough to hold on by.'

'Then there is a snug phaeton in which you can drive yourself and your aunt and your cousins round the country—I don't mean Great Britain, but the neighbourhood. There is the club at Bristol. I have put your name down, and you can use it whilst you are here. You have the sea within easy reach. Wales is not far off, and you can fetch any of the Channel ports whenever you like by steamer from Bristol. I don't know whether we shall be able to manufacture any dances for you—we have not been here long enough to be able to fill a room—but dinners I think

we can promise; and what further programme can we make out, Sophia?’

‘Nothing further is wanted,’ said I. ‘It is already most hospitably abundant.’

Presently my aunt said something about Florence Hawke, and asked Amelia at what hour that day Mr. Hawke was expected.

‘At five or six this afternoon,’ was the reply. ‘There’s an anthem I much want to hear to be sung at service this morning in the Cathedral, and I arranged yesterday with Florence to go. We shall walk there, and her carriage will fetch us.’

‘Will you take me?’ said I. ‘Nothing delights me so much as sacred music.’

‘By all means come,’ answered my kind cousin.

‘Miss Hawke, I hope, won’t think me intrusive?’ said I.

‘Why should she?’ exclaimed the hearty, good-natured Sophie.

‘Intrusive! You mean complimentary,’ observed my uncle. ‘D’ye suppose, man, she’ll reckon you go for the love of music?’

The downrightness of this somewhat abashed me. ‘But I should like to hear the music,’ said I; ‘and is not the Cathedral worth seeing?’

‘Never was in it,’ he answered.

‘I am thinking,’ said my aunt, addressing her husband, and then looking at her daughters as if seeking for encouragement to deliver what was in her mind, ‘that Mr. Hawke might—I mean that as we cannot pretend to be ignorant of his views respecting——’

‘What, my love? What do you want to say?’ asked my uncle.

‘Why,’ she continued, ‘he might not perhaps like Florence to—he might not thank us for introducing——’ she could not go on, perhaps not liking to be too plain, and yet not knowing how to convey her meaning otherwise than plainly. But we all guessed what she meant, and my uncle said—

‘Let old Mr. Hawke hang himself. What is it to us? If he objects to his daughter meeting young men, let him lock her up. I really cannot confine Jack to his bedroom because, being at large, he is likely to annoy Mr. Hawke by being polite to his daughter when he meets her, and by offering to accompany her and his cousin—his cousin, my dear—to hear a performance of sacred music.’

‘I shouldn’t be too sensitive about Mr. Hawke’s feelings, mamma, if I were you,’ said Sophie. ‘Why shouldn’t Cousin Jack know Florence, and walk with her and Amelia? I am sure he is worth a thousand Mr. Morecombes.’

'Say twenty thousand, Sophie,' I exclaimed, feeling that I could hug the dear girl for her goodness and loyalty.

'I am a father myself,' said my uncle, lying back in his chair and taking a complacent look round the table, 'and I should be very sorry to do anything calculated to bother a man in his wishes concerning his children. But I am not going to trouble myself on matters I *can't* help. I should be sorry to call upon Mr. Hawke and tell him that in my opinion he is a *prig*, for subordinating his daughter's happiness in the future to a twopenny anxiety to drag some poor creature of a man into the family, whose one recommendation is that when his father dies he will be a baronet. I would not tell him that, I say. But d'y'e suppose I'm not going to have my brother's son to stop with me, that I am going to shut my door against my own sex, because Miss Florence visits here, and old Hawke would be angry if she should go and give her heart to one of my guests instead of reserving it—or the shell of it, for it 'll be but a hollow thing she presents if she's forced to hand it over to the wrong man—instead of reserving it, I say, for the coxcomb her father wants her to have?'

'Well, I am sure I never thought my remarks would have led to all this,' said my aunt ruefully. 'Nobody could have a greater contempt for Mr. Hawke's notions of marriage than I. All that I meant to say was that we, as acquaintances and neighbours of his—I mean, that as Florence very often comes to see us——' here she broke down again.

I felt it time to speak.

'Why this anxiety, aunt? am I going to pounce upon the young lady and carry her off? is it the dove that usually bolts with the hawk? I admit that she is a lovely girl. There would be nothing very astonishing in any guest or male friend of yours falling in love with her; but if he flattered himself on *winning* her I should either consider him demented or insufferably conceited. But as you object to my——'

'No, no!' she interrupted, 'I don't object—indeed not, Mr. Jack. I only—what I mean is—indeed, if you don't accompany her and Amelia you'll make me feel quite uncomfortable.'

This ended it, my uncle rounding it off with a burst of laughter.

I can be as fastidious in my views as my betters, and I yield to no man in respecting the right sort of parental opinions on the duties and behaviour of young ladies; and when therefore I look back, I am unable to find the least possible impropriety in my volunteering to escort two girls to service at a Cathedral to

hear a particular anthem sung. Yet suppose I had not been strictly within, and well within, the bounds of decorum, I should still have begged my cousin to take me to the service and risked the chance of being thought improper. My uncle was right; it was not the sacred music, it was not the Cathedral that drew me. I wanted to be in Miss Florence's company again; I wanted to enjoy the delight of being near her, of being able to see her beautiful face and hear her sweet voice.

So, shortly after breakfast, Amelia and I left the house for Clifton Lodge (let Mr. Hawke's residence have that name), I handsomely equipped with a gay flower that loyal and tender-hearted Sophie had pinned upon my coat whilst I waited in the hall for Amelia, and my cousin in bright colours which she topped with a green parasol that gave her warm fat face a kind of copper-like splendour. Our road took us from the valley of the Avon, and when you are out of sight of that fairy-like ravine, the noble heights of rocks, the shining river that winds at bottom, and the wonders of vegetation whose rich summer hues make the whole place like a piece of tropical scenery, Clifton does not offer many points for a man to posture over in description. I own I was not greatly disturbed by the sight of dust and villas. My thoughts were considerably ahead of me—along with Miss Florence Hawke: and I believe, had the Alps been shifted by an earthquake and brought alongside I should not have taken much notice of them.

We arrived at the house, and a very handsome building it was: square, detached, with a sort of tower upon it, and stone figures of angels or graces or muses at the corners. It was as big again as my uncle's; but whether I was prejudiced by what I had heard of old Hawke, or whether the house was really suggestive, as I found it, it seemed to me, for all its conservatories, its rich window drapery, its steps, pillars, and the rest of it, a cold, formal, precise-looking home. It had a look of opulent genteelness, and if I had been asked to design a house for a rich man who was without blood, and anxious to procure some, Clifton Lodge is the sort of residence I should have given him.

There was a short carriage drive to the door: we marched along with powdered boots, and pulled the bell. A fellow in grand livery opened the door and conducted us to the drawing-room, quite too sumptuously furnished for my taste, much as I value the fine and the beautiful: full of gilt and marble, with a hand-painted ceiling—in short, pretty nearly as overpowering as one of Lord Bute's rooms in Cardiff Castle, which I had the honour to inspect when I visited that part.

'Mighty splendid!' said I to Amelia, looking about me and missing something—I don't know what—which had it been there would have prevented me from finding it so hard and cold. 'And this is Miss Hawke's home?'

'Is it not very magnificent?' whispered my cousin. 'Mr. Hawke must have brought a lot of Australian gold with him to Clifton, for everything seems gold here. Aren't you surprised now to think how unaffected and childlike Florence is? One would suppose that a girl living in such splendour would think herself too good for anybody but lords and ladies.'

'Well,' said I, 'if I lived here I don't know that I should be able to walk. The earth would be too low for my boots. Surely her father ought to have a soul above the son of a baronet!' said I, glaring at a lady in a cloud blowing a trumpet amid a grummet of flowers upon the ceiling.

'The son will be the eighth baronet when he gets it,' said she. 'And I believe the Morecombes are connected in various ways with about twenty titled families.'

A plague upon him and his connections, thought I: and as this benediction upon him rolled up out of my soul Miss Hawke came in dressed for the walk. She looked surprised to see me, and slightly blushed. I presume, when the footman gave our name she supposed I was my uncle. But the look was all the expression her surprise found, and it was replaced by a smile, so uncommonly like one of pleasure, that as it passed over her face my heart struck a loud whop in my bosom.

She gave me her little gloved hand to shake, said she was very glad to see me, and asked if I was going to the Cathedral with them.

'Yes, if I may,' said I. 'When Amelia spoke of the anthem, I begged leave to hear it too. I hope I am not intrusive. Nobody asked me. I am here by my own invitation.'

'Why shouldn't you come?' said she smiling, but looking shyly. 'The choir is a good one. If you like sacred music you will enjoy the singing.'

As we left the house I asked if the Cathedral was far.

'Almost far enough for a drive if you are a bad walker,' she answered.

'We shall drive back,' said Amelia. 'The way is nearly all down-hill. Not that I very much care to use a carriage when I go to church, even on week-days. I dislike seeing people roll up to a church door as if they expected the vicar, and his curates, and the pew-opener, and the sexton to come out and stand in a row and

bow to them. It is excusable, perhaps, on a week-day, or when people are old or have the gout.'

'Yes, at church we are all equals,' said I, 'and ought to arrive on foot, the nobleman and the chimney-sweep, the footman and the baronet.'

I brought in the word *baronet* for the sake of putting a little malicious emphasis upon it; but Miss Florence took no notice. What an adorable profile was hers to turn to as I walked by her side! There was not an atom of stiffness in her talk. Had we been auld acquaintance she could not have addressed me more freely and pleasantly. She laughed at my little jokes (little they were), asked me about the sea, wondered how I could have had the heart to give up the life and liberty of the ocean, and spoke of the sailor's calling as the manliest in the world.

'What!' cried Amelia, 'more manly than the soldier's?'

'Certainly,' she answered; 'they cannot be mentioned in the same breath. Don't you agree with me, Mr. Seymour?'

'Agree with you, Miss Hawke! indeed I do, from the bottom of my heart!' I answered, and I barely saved myself from adding that had she argued in favour of the soldier's life I should have agreed with her with all my soul, just the same.

It was a very short walk to me. When Amelia said 'The Cathedral, Jack, is in College Green there, just round the corner,' I exclaimed, 'I thought you said, Miss Hawke, that it was almost far enough for a drive? Were it five times further it would not be too far for me.'

Very hot it was, being a cloudless morning, and many a fathom we measured without meeting with the relief of an inch of shade; but though corpulence is not popularly supposed to revel in the dog-days, my fat and amiable cousin declared she enjoyed the heat, and walked as if perspiration had been prescribed; whilst the only effect produced on Miss Florence by the exercise and the temperature was a slight deepening of the delicate peach-like tint on her cheeks. As I swung along at her side, listening to her pretty voice and looking at her charming face, it seemed difficult to realise that yesterday at that hour, aye, and for some hours later, she had no existence so far as I was concerned. Indeed, I seemed to have known her an age—a notion produced probably by my thoughts having been full of her from the moment I clapped eyes on her.

I should like to be able to write in praise of Bristol Cathedral. The mere circumstance of Florence Hawke living in the neighbourhood ought to have made living poetry and beauty not only

of the old pile, but of every brick and chimney-pot in the city. But there is a nakedness and a most unlovely grimness about the Cathedral that renders admiration very difficult. Outside, the structure has the look of a fortress, and inside it is as naked as a stable. The pews or benches are crowded together at one end, where there is a trifling show of ecclesiastical furniture; and to reach those seats you have to navigate a small Atlantic Ocean of stone floor with pillars on either side; and the sterility of the cold and stony scene is emphasised, rather than relieved, by here and there—as widely scattered as currants in a sailor's dumpling—a memorial of brass or marble. In most cathedrals there is something to look at. What is shown may often be a sham. Still, a small stock of faith will enable you to gaze with interest, as for instance at the Black Prince's armour at Canterbury, which, for all one knows, may have been manufactured at Birmingham, whence a great number of ancient relics are, I believe, annually exported. But Bristol Cathedral offers you nothing. Historic memories no doubt it has; but there is nothing to touch, to hang over, to muse upon in the form of a tomb, an old banner, a stain on the flags where some holy man gave up the ghost.

And yet one church Bristol has that atones for the unfurnished Cathedral. I mean St. Mary Redcliffe. It is an architectural dream, most beautiful and tender. Why are not all churches equally lovely? Were they so, I am sure we should all be more religious. Ladies, St. Mary Redcliffe is a church to get married in. Why, even a wedding for money—ay, even the nuptials of a foolish old rich woman with a sneaking rapacious young man—would take an idyllic character in St. Mary Redcliffe. But I say, Bristolians, where got you that effigy of poor little Chatterton? Could anything be more foolish? I'm a Dutchman if it isn't like a memorial to a tomtit. Think of a structure resembling a shrine surmounted by a caricature in little of a Lord Mayor of the last century! Was Chatterton a genius? 'Pon my word, I never could understand his ancient lingo; but if he had no more talent than I have, who could not make a rhyme though ten pounds of pure Virginia were offered me for a couplet, may I be hanged if I would have consented to the erection of such a scarecrow had I hailed from old Sebastian Cabot's port.

Well, Miss Hawke and my cousin and I entered the Cathedral and joined the worshippers (few enough, but business is business, and this wasn't Sunday) and heard the anthem. A fine piece of rumbling music it was, and well sung. The memory of it would inspire me to attempt some elegant writing had I heard it in any

other interior, say Durham, or Winchester (wherein I have knelt as a bairn), or Gloucester, but the nakedness of the building ran amuck with emotion. The dim, rich, holy light, the ghostly tatters of ancient banners hovering like petrified bats in the gloom of a dark roof that has reverberated the orisons of generations, the stone warriors on their backs with their mailed hands crossed upon their pale bosoms and their noses gone to join their souls, the satyr-like effigies which glower like the nightmares of mad Chinamen from darksome corners—such and a score of other sacerdotal wonders which no man who has heaved at a capstan and sat astride a yard-arm can be expected to remember, were wanting as adjuncts to that rolling and growling and swelling anthem in Bristol Cathedral.

And yet the grand melodies, the sweet and silver tenor notes, the tremulous thunder of the solemn organ echo in my soul to this hour, as a sacred setting of that poem of womanhood who sat on my right hand in a posture of devotion listening to the heavenly strains. Aye, depend upon it that any girl who wants to enrich and make large and splendid a young man's idea of her cannot do better than carry him off to hear an anthem sung in a cathedral. The ball-room bequeaths the memory of white shoulders, sparkling eyes, waltzing measures, and so forth; the dinner-table pretty much the same thing, sometimes including the waltzing measures; the parlour experience is homely, and sentiment gets mixed up with darning, hemming, and such matters. But to sit by the side of a lovely girl in a cathedral and hear an anthem sung is to enjoy a singular elevation of emotion. She becomes a part of the sacred entertainment. She humanises the music and the music spiritualises her. This may be rather German as a piece of subtlety, but none the less is it true. I can tell you this: I understood that anthem all the better for looking at Florence Hawke; yes, and I found her sweetness the sweeter and her womanly beauty the womanlier for watching her and thinking of her, to the tune that rolled out of the organ's melodious heart with a deep-throated reverberation that sometimes set the seat we were on quivering.

Service being over we came away, and outside found Alphonso Hawke's carriage—a regal turn-out, quite in keeping with the gilt and velvet and marble of Clifton Lodge. There was a device on the panels that looked uncommonly like a lord's, and might have passed for something of the kind to a person not nicely acquainted with odds and ends of that sort.

'Is it too hot for a drive, dear, before we go home?' asked Miss Hawke, addressing Amelia, of course, for I was not dear yet.

'No; if it is not too hot to walk it is not too hot to drive,' answered Amelia. 'Would you like a drive, Jack?'

'Very much,' said I. So we got into the carriage, Miss Hawke gave some directions to the footman, and off we went, honoured by the notice of everybody we encountered. Indeed, I never before observed people stare so hard at a carriage as the Bristolians we met did at ours. The reason lay in the men's livery, I think. It was as gaudy as an alderman's, a blaze of crimson and gold, and they had white hair and shining stockings. We talked of the anthem, and Miss Hawke asked me what I thought of the Cathedral. I gave her my opinion, and she agreed with me.

'It is the only disappointment I have,' said she. 'We Australians are always dreaming of the antiquities of England; and when papa told me we were going to live near a cathedral, I pictured a place like Westminster Abbey, full of wonderful tombs, glorious windows, beautiful monuments, and sanctified spots railed off and hidden in twilight. However, it is better than no cathedral at all.'

This was about the most sensible thing that was said during the drive; all the rest of the conversation was made up of the idle chatter which three persons—who are no company—will bestow on one another. The young ladies spoke of persons who were strangers to me: of Mrs. Jones' last dance; of Mrs. Robinson's projected garden-party; of Miss Chirrup learning singing with the idea of going on the stage. I had as much to say, too; as either of them, tried to be funny and made them laugh, anyhow. I took no notice of the course the coachman was steering; whether he was heading north or south I could not say. It was enough for me that I was sitting opposite Florence Hawke, that my knee touched the sacred hem—let me call it hem—of her exquisitely-fitting dress, that I was breathing the atmosphere that her lovely presence made fragrant. I say that was enough for me. What did it matter how old red-and-gold on the box pulled the reins? All that I desired was that he should not be in a hurry to carry us home. The drive was largely meant for me, I knew, and so now and again I would admire the scenery and ask whose house that was, and pretend to be interested in the landscape. But I have no recollection of the view. Nearly all that I can remember is Florence, her shining winning eyes, the light upon her hair, the delicate tint upon her face cast by the crimson parasol in her hand, her unaffected laughter, and, best of all, shipmate, the real pleasure she seemed to find in my company, as if there was something in my talk that brightened up her spirits.

And why not? She loved Sydney, and I knew the place well. She liked sailors, and I had been one and was still one at heart. She had made long voyages, and could understand me only as a girl might who had rounded the Horn twice, and knew what a four months' passage is. Might she not, then, have found a kind of salt-water flavour about me that would come as a novelty to her now and awaken pleasant thoughts?

By-and-by we came to a road that had two branches, one leading to Clifton Lodge and the other to my uncle's house; and here Amelia asked Miss Hawke to accompany us home to lunch.

'I hoped you and Mr. Seymour would have lunched with me,' said Miss Florence.

'As you please, dear,' said Amelia, with the good-natured indifference to things which I have often taken notice of in fat people.

'Home,' warbled the sweet girl to the resplendent creature on the box; and presently we arrived at Clifton Lodge.

The old Arabian romancers were fond of bringing young men of various social standing and princesses together, and making the princesses overwhelm the young men with favours and sweetmeats, until the young men, bewildered by so much kindness and so much beauty, came at last to wonder whether they stood on their heels or their heads. As I followed the girls into Clifton Lodge I must say my feelings very much resembled those of the Arabian young men. I had met a young princess, and by a combination of events over which I had had no control, though I could not have marshalled them to greater advantage to myself had I had the ordering of them, I was privileged to be in her company, and enjoy her conversation and society so continuously as to make the chances by which that spell of bliss came about quite singular to remember.

Take the circumstances in their order: first, her papa was away; then there was the meeting her on the previous night and her stopping to dinner; then there was the arrangement with Amelia to hear the anthem, my stepping in and asking leave to go too, the walk to the Cathedral, the sitting through the service, the drive, and now the invitation to lunch. It was all perfectly correct. I question if the most acidulated old lady living, bless her! could find an excuse for a scowl in any point of this narrative of my meeting and acquaintance with Florence Hawke, so far. But nevertheless, this girl and I were so much together at the first start that I say there was something singular in it.

She took my cousin upstairs, and I was left alone in the draw-

ing-room, where, after casting my eyes round the spacious apartment and surveying the costly ornaments, the resplendent chairs and the various other objects with much wonder and without the least pleasure, I opened an album bound in silver and ivory, with Alphonso Hawke's crest (his *crest*!)—a kind of shield with something that looked like a goose perched on top of it, its wings extended and its bill cocked up as though it were asking forgiveness for its absurd posture—and looked at the photographs. Here I found correct portraits of her gracious Majesty, likewise the late Prince Consort and the Heir Apparent in Highland costume; also several persons of quality; and among these august and noble people there were scattered likenesses of the Hawke family and the most genteel of their friends. But the book was very thinly furnished. It was a show-volume meant for visitors. The likenesses of Hawke's relations and early acquaintances and antipodean friends were, I suppose, kept in a separate book intended for the use of the family and the domestics only.

But in looking over this album I came across a lovely profile likeness of Miss Florence. It was a Paris photograph; the shadowing and light very fine, the pose perfect in grace and refinement. She was seated bending over a book, her hand to her forehead, and tresses of her hair delicately fringing her fingertips. As I sat entranced the ladies entered. I was so full of the subject that I immediately exclaimed, 'What an exquisite portrait this is, Miss Hawke!'

They both came up to look. When Miss Florence saw that it was her likeness she slightly smiled, her colour deepened.

'It is considered good,' said she.

'It is perfect,' said I, rapturously. 'Have you one, Amelia?'

'One of my own?' asked Amelia.

'One of these?' said I, and I pointed to the lovely portrait.

'No, Jack,' answered Amelia.

'I only had a dozen,' said Miss Florence, 'and this, I believe, is the last of them. If you would like to have it, Amelia, you are very welcome to it, dear.'

'May I extract it at once?' said I; and without waiting for permission I withdrew it tremblingly but with extraordinary care, and said, 'I will put it in my pocket and keep it for you, Amelia,' and so saying I pocketed it.

All this was more significant than talking. Amelia giggled, and did not know how to look nor what to say. Miss Florence, on the other hand, threw a veil of charming transparent tact over the little interlude, by coming close to the table and saying, whilst

she pointed to the portraits, 'That is my father, Mr. Seymour; and that is my poor mother,' and as I stooped to peer at Mr. Alphonso Hawke's features a footman announced luncheon.

Cold chicken and tongue, cutlets and claret and champagne and salad—of such was the modest repast composed, and I could not but think that the splendidly-dressed flunkey who waited upon us was ashamed of the poverty of the meal. The table in its abridged form wanted at least five-and-twenty people to fill it, and I should think that seventy or eighty guests could very comfortably have dined in the great room that formed the ground floor of the largest wing of the house. The walls were crowded with pictures, whether good or bad I do not know, and the furniture was of very magnificently carved oak, the back of the sideboard being pretty nearly as tall as the room, and enriched with all sorts of cuttings.

Thought I, however old Hawke has earned his money, plenty of it he must have; and when I looked at the lovable, beautiful creature who sat at the head of the table, and whose figure was thrown into sweet relief by the handsome livery of the fellow who hung in the wake of her chair, and reflected upon the fortune she was pretty sure to step into—for so far as I had learnt there was but another child—and considered the crowds of handsome young men and high-born young men—men, who, if they had not the capacity of going forward were capable of going back to any extent, who would be only too happy to mingle their blood with old Hawke's for the privilege of possessing his lovely daughter and his Australian sovereigns—I say that when I looked at her and thought thus, my heart sank, a gloom fell upon my spirits, and I felt disposed to curse the chance that had brought me acquainted with my uncle, and led to my visit to Clifton.

By-and-by the footman went out of the room. I was fumbling over a peach when Amelia said—quite sequentially, for the conversation led up to the remark—'Florence, dear, are you glad or sorry that Mr. Morecombe is coming?'

'Now, you know, Amelia, that I don't care a snap of the finger either one way or the other,' answered Miss Hawke laughing.

'Is Mr. Morecombe a connection of yours, Miss Hawke?'

said I, looking and talking innocently.

'Tell my cousin he would like to be, Florence,' exclaimed Amelia chuckling, and squeezing grapes into her mouth and looking at me with a kind of leer, as if she wished me to know she approved of my pretended ignorance.

'No, he is no connection,' answered Miss Hawke very quietly.

'He is a son of Sir Reginald Morecombe, a person my father has a high regard for. He is coming here on a visit—Mr. Seymour, will you please give me a peach ?

What was the meaning of the smile that flitted over her face ? Could she read in me that I was half mad to ask her if there was the faintest chance in the world of her complying with her papa's desire ? Well, I must have been an ass to suppose that she could interpret my thoughts like that. Yet my mind was so full at that moment that I could not but suspect she had caught a glimpse of a portion of what was whirling and simmering in it.

'What is young Mr. Morecombe ?' said I. 'An army man ?'

'He is nothing,' said Miss Hawke.

'Very much nothing at all,' observed Amelia.

I waited breathless, thinking that Miss Hawke would speak in his favour.

'I am afraid he is rather a fool,' said she ; whereupon I laughed at the top of my voice.

'Why were fools invented ?' I exclaimed, as lively as a sparrow on a sudden. 'To mitigate any spirit of discontent that might sometimes visit monkeys ? Or as standards for measuring the intellect of ladies ?'

'Why do you say that ?' cried Amelia. 'Are women only fit for fools ?'

'No, no !' said I. 'The women who are above fools can't be measured by them. I am speaking of women who allow fools to make love to them and who end in marrying fools.'

'A girl may marry a fool and not know he is a fool until she finds him her husband,' said Miss Hawke.

I wouldn't have contradicted her to save my life ; but for all that I didn't agree with her. A man, it is true, may prove a bigger fool after marriage to his wife than he seemed before, because his wife has had the chance of looking deeper into him ; but if he was ever a fool at all, he was a fool before his marriage, and the woman knew it.

'I should not object very much to stupid men,' said Amelia, 'if they were foolishly amiable and not generally conceited. I don't profess to know much about Mr. Morecombe, but so far as I have gone, what annoys me most in him is this : when he puts his glass into his eye and looks around, there can be no question that he thinks himself a person of consequence, and that he embellishes life. *He!* Oh, my dear ! whenever I meet with what papa calls a swell, I always wonder how many feet high it would

be necessary to mount into the air to look down and not be able to see the noble creature.'

'How terribly democratic they are in America, Mr. Seymour!' exclaimed Miss Hawke, laughing. 'In Australia, you know, we reverence pedigree.'

'Yes, the Australians are a loyal people; they believe in lords and sing "God Save the Queen,"' said I. 'And, don't you see, Amelia, that your notion of going into the air and losing sight of the swell hits the man of genius too. Would little Thomas Moore have been visible three miles down?'

'Not his body, but the best part of him would,' said Miss Hawke, 'for Amelia could take the "Irish Melodies" into the air with her.'

I should have praised this as a neat turn in anybody; but coming from Miss Florence it sounded to me incomparably fine. I was delighted, and said it was worthy of Hook. (Why Hook? I must have meant Hood.)

'Pray, Miss Hawke,' said I, 'where is Flora?'

'Flora? Oh, poor dear old Flora, I am sorry to say, is not well. The housekeeper is nursing her downstairs. But you are not sorry, *are* you? You think her vicious. Even had she been well I should not have introduced her. And yet she cannot bite. She has no teeth.'

'You should order a false set for her,' says Amelia with a sober face.

'I love poor old Flora,' continued Miss Hawke, in her tender voice. [Observe! It was delightful to hear her say 'I love.' Her lips were made to form the words, her face to look the thought expressed!] 'She was my mother's pet, and has been mine ever since mamma died. It will grieve me when poor Flora goes; and I simply hate the coachman for telling me this morning that he's afraid she will not last much longer.'

'Don't let the coachman distress you,' said I softly. 'I have a poor opinion of coachmen as a body. They know very little. Let them stick to horses and leave dogs alone.'

'Jack, it is time to go,' said Amelia, looking at the clock. 'Why, Florence, your papa and Mr. Morecombe will be arriving at six o'clock and finding us still at lunch.' And up she jumped.

Miss Hawke begged her not to be in a hurry: it was only half-past two. For my part I should have been willing to go on stopping until I had been turned out; but I could not stay without Amelia, and Amelia declared she must go. So my cousin went to put on her hat, and when that job—which kept me waiting

twenty minutes—was performed, we bade Miss Hawke farewell, and passed out of the house with all the state that could be conferred upon us by a footman holding open the door, a butler bowing, and another fellow in livery in the distance looking on.

‘I have thoroughly enjoyed my morning,’ said I, as we walked in the direction of my uncle’s house.

‘I am very glad to hear it,’ replied Amelia. ‘We want you to enjoy yourself whilst you are with us. And I hope you will not be in a hurry to go.’

‘You are all delightfully kind and good. This sort of life, I fear, will unfit me for lodgings in London. I am afraid it will make me want to get married, Amelia.’

‘Well,’ says she, laughing, ‘you ought not to find much trouble when you do make up your mind. You are very impressionable—you will not be hard to please, will you?’

‘Why do you say that? Here am I twenty-five years old, and I have never been in love yet.’

‘That may be,’ said she; ‘but you are in love now, aren’t you?’

I coloured, hesitated, and then exclaimed: ‘Yes, I think I am—I am pretty sure I am. How lovely she is! how gentle! how kind! who could help loving her?’

‘That is what I mean by your being impressionable,’ said Amelia, laughing pleasantly. ‘You arrived here last evening; it is now about three o’clock, and in that time you have fallen in love.’

‘Well, don’t make a joke of it, Amelia. If it isn’t permissible to fall in love with a girl like Florence Hawke almost as fast as one can look at her, why should nature allow the emotion to exist? Eh, I think that’s a puzzler, isn’t it?’ and I heard myself laughing harshly.

‘I am not making a joke of it, Jack,’ answered Amelia. ‘I believe if I were a man I should fall in love with Florence myself. I don’t mean to say that she is so *wondrously* beautiful as the gentlemen profess to find her; but she has a sweet character, and if I were a man that is what I should like best in a wife.’

‘Yes, and that is exactly what I like best in Florence’ (what a horrible hypocrite I was!). And then a cloud gathering upon my brow, ‘I wish,’ I mumbled moodily, ‘I had never seen her. I shall have her on the brain, and no good can come of it. Her father has got hold of the tiller and will steer her as he wants, and the very sweetness of character you speak of is just an assurance that she will answer her helm. Besides, what chance should

I stand, in any case?' And with my stick I let fly at the twigs of the hedge past which we were walking.

'I think she is disposed to like you, do you know, Jack?' said Amelia.

'What put that into your head?'

'We were talking of you in the bedroom, and she said she enjoyed your frank manners. It was like going a voyage to sit with you, she said.'

'Ah!'

'She also observed that the difference between a young man like Mr. Morecombe and a young man like you was the difference between the hot atmosphere of an evening party and the bright breeze of the sea-shore. No,' she continued, 'I'm wrong. It was I who said that. But she agreed with me so thoroughly that it was just the same as if she had said it.'

'What else did she say?'

'Why,' she answered, trying to remember, 'I think she then changed the subject by speaking of her dog.'

'May I smoke a cigar?' I asked. She gave me permission. 'Can you explain,' I asked, 'how it is that Mr. Alphonso Hawke, if he is so very anxious to marry his daughter, both daughters I presume, to blood, should be living here instead of in London, where his means should enable him to get the class of man he wants about him?'

*'You say both daughters; but Emily Hawke is never likely to marry,' answered Amelia. 'The poor thing is little better than an invalid. She suffers from a weak or curved spine, and her chest is affected. Periodically she visits some fashionable doctor in London, and that is why, I believe, she is away with her father now. I am sure I cannot tell why Mr. Hawke does not live in London. Perhaps he is not so very sure of being able to get the society he likes. This place agrees with him and Emily, he told papa. Besides, if Mr. Morecombe comes up to his idea of an eligible young man, then, as he has got him, and as one is enough—for we are not *Mormons* at Clifton, Jack—he may think it would only be a waste of money to live in London for the sake of getting others.'*

'What do you mean by got him, Amelia?' I rattled out. 'You don't mean to say that his marriage with Miss Florence is settled?'

'I believe it is in Mr. Hawke's mind, and no doubt in young Morecombe's. But not in Florence's; she is not likely to accept a man she can ridicule.'

'That's no guarantee!' I muttered. 'But gracious mercy! if it is only a question of blood with Mr. Hawke, cannot he get higher than young Morecombe?'

'Yes, but he is evidently satisfied with the blood of the Morecombes.'

'I wish I could spill it! I wish some one would shed it!' I exclaimed. 'If the father attacks his daughter on one side and the representative of the blood of the Morecombes attacks her on the other, she must yield: she is doomed; her amiability will be her fatality. She will be crushed under the ruins of her own good nature.'

'Is it not a little early for you to begin to tear your hair, Jack?' said Amelia, laughing heartily. 'You really cannot have made up your mind upon the state of your heart *yet*. Wait a little.'

'Whatever may be the state of my heart, Amelia,' said I, 'I have bared it to you, and you will respect the solemn secret you have beheld in it.'

'Oh, certainly!'

'You will not breathe a word of this conversation to your papa or mamma?'

'Not a syllable. There is nothing to breathe.' And as she said this, with difficulty preserving her gravity, we entered the grounds of my uncle's house.

(To be continued.)

An Opening for the Unemployed in Ireland.

IT is possible that the mere suggestion of industrial art affording an opening for the unemployed in Ireland will cause a smile to many who should give it serious consideration, and who possibly anticipate something funny to follow at Irish expense. There is, however, nothing amusing in the subject, but much that is sadly strange, when we consider that, as it involves a very practical possibility for establishing prosperity in a greatly impoverished country, it has not long since received greater attention.

It may be premised that there is no occasion in this connection to discuss the political troubles of Ireland. But much may be written on the fact that there are constant complaints of idleness or inertness in the country among a people who are not lazier than any others. When the Irish emigrant is settled in America he works very hard; considering his past, far more than could have been expected. This is unquestionable. He would do the same at home under the same conditions. And since the same conditions do not exist, the question is, Cannot others be created for him?

The other conditions are manifestly the development of agriculture and manufactures. Owing to the political condition of the country or to cognate causes, capital does not seek Ireland in such amount as to advance very materially these great sources of a nation's wealth. Since the great supplies fail, let us see if there are no small ones.

Ireland being but a small country, it is the more probable that minor industries and minor arts zealously pursued would flourish in it to great advantage. But the minor industries at the present day mean arts, and demand peculiar qualifications. Italy and Switzerland and the East, especially Japan, would be in a worse condition than Ireland now is were it not for 'the leaven of art' which still exists among them. The Irishman, unfortunately, is regarded at the present day as about the last person on earth to

be concerned with any arts beyond those of hod-carrying, distilling, and, in America, of small political scheming. And yet the Irishman has a high capacity for art, and I trust to be able to prove it.

I do not believe that any member of the great Aryan family of nations ever lost a single power which it once possessed. There are as good fish in that sea as ever came out of it. It was a clever race in prehistoric times, and no one can say that the stream was ever less broad than it is now. It had men who were almost Shakespeares, and who were quite as much as Bopps and Grimms, before it had writing. If there ever were people of whom it may be said, 'What man has done, man may do,' it is the Aryans. Now, if I can prove that there ever was a time when the Irish were pre-eminently an art-loving and an artistic people, I shall beg leave to assume that, arguing by the strongest analogy, they may again become so. It is only within a very few years that one could venture on this statement. Until very recently the world was not well enough educated to understand it.

We are only just coming into an age when decoration is allowed to be an art at all. To the connoisseur or dilettante of the last generation, nurtured in the Renaissance and Greek statue-life, the wondrous 'Book of Kells,' that great triumph of a pure illuminated manuscript, seemed only eccentric barbarism and industrious idleness. And I have yet to hear or read anywhere, what I earnestly believe, that the so-called Later Celtic or purely Irish decoration is, take it altogether, the most elegant and ingenious style of decoration which the world has ever seen. But I will speak of this more fully anon.

When Roman art had died and was not yet fully revived in the Romanesque, there sprung up in an obscure corner of Europe that which eventually gave tone to, and determined more than any other cause whatever, the decorative art of the Middle Ages. When I say the decorative art of this period, I say, in a word, all its art. For there never was a phase of art which was so decorative. It compared to the Classic or the Greek as a forest of every kind of tree bound with a million vines and coloured with millions of flowers, compares with a group of columns or a single grove of palms. Now, the soul of all this fanciful tracery and wild ornament was derived from the illuminations of the manuscripts. This art preceded the wonderfully florid architecture in which it reappeared. And this art was Irish. It was purely and entirely Irish. It was in its very beginning also Celtic or British.

This was while it was limited to the *bascaudæ*, or baskets, woven in curious wise and coloured with many hues, which were sent from Britain even to Rome. And it was, as I think with a contributor to 'Archæologia,' that in these baskets existed the origin of the Irish and Runic knot-work. It was common to Ireland and to Scandinavia; but as Ireland by far excelled in it, I give it to her as her own. In the darkest days of the dark ages there was a bright fire of intellect in Ireland. It manifested itself not only in the purest piety, in theology, and poetry, in legend and lay, but in a new art. From this fire went bright sparks, which kindled fresher fire all over Europe. Irish monks carried to the court of Charlemagne the new style of illuminating manuscripts. There it combined with the heavy Romanesque, which was as yet almost Roman. From this union sprang the Gothic, but all that was most original and remarkable in it was Irish. Those who would verify what I have said, and see examples of it, may consult the 'Palæographia Pieta,' of Westwood, who was, I believe, one of the first to make known the wonderful influence which Ireland exerted in art. Architecture also flourished at the same time in Ireland to a degree which is even now known to but few. I hazard the statement, which I believe will yet be verified, that before the advent of Norman architecture there were more and better stone edifices in Ireland than were ever erected by the Saxons. The Irish architectural ornament of this age was wild and strange. It was in truth barbarous, but it was vigorous and very original. It abounded in deeply mysterious symbols borrowed from some early faith or cult of which we at present know really almost nothing. In it the serpent plays a strange part, hinting Oriental origin. When the Norman style came, it assumed something of the wild and mystical character of that which preceded it. This is specially to be noticed at Cashel. The Round Towers, and especially the early stone crosses of Ireland, are wonderful. The extravagant theories and fancies of such antiquaries as O'Brien and Vallancey have cast discredit on the claims of Irish art to great antiquity. They claimed too much. On the other hand Petrie lays too little stress on what may or must have been the prototypes of these towers, and many other remains of Irish art. I have endeavoured to study the subject very impartially, and my opinion is that the peculiar ornamental art of Northern Europe had its origin in Ireland, and that it was based on a very early cultus which is as yet enveloped in mystery. It is certain that it was very vigorous and very ancient. We can trace it back

to the sculptured stones of prehistoric times. We see the peculiar ornaments of a really savage era gradually developing into beauty until we find them in church doors, crosses, illuminated manuscripts, and finally in the so-called Later Celtic bronze-work which also exists in silver and gold ornaments.

To the impartial student of decorative art, the Later Celtic metal-work is almost miraculous. At first sight it seems to be Gothic. But when carefully examined it has so many and such admirable characteristics that it must in fairness be allowed a place by itself. Its two great differences from the contemporary ornament of Europe, or what came later, lie in this. Gothic art, with all its richness and variety, was given to repetition. Later Celtic is simply of incredible variety. Every design in it indicates that its artists never repeated themselves. They combined intricacy with elegance to a degree which astonishes us. Secondly, they did what I believe cannot be found even in the illimitable inventions of all Gothic and Oriental art combined. They made the pattern and the background alternate. We find in it the ground rising at times to equality in design with the pattern, and then disappearing. In any Gothic design, or even any of Moorish origin, the practised designer can at once detect the construction lines, or the principle on which a pattern is drawn. At the first glance a Later Celtic pattern seems to be quite intelligible. But look into it closely and we find it very difficult of solution. It may seem to consist of a few circles or spirals, with interlacing lines and simple finials. But these blend and change so as to make such a pattern the hardest in the world to copy.

Whatever opinion the world may have as to the æsthetic value of this Irish art, one thing at least is true. The men who made it had the minds which could have mastered anything in merely decorative art. They may have been savages, but, if so, they were savages of wonderful capacity. For they were nothing if they were not original. And their art was manifestly universal or general. It was produced by common artisans. It was of the people. It was most evidently not produced under the greatest advantages of wealth and luxury or patronage.

It might be a matter of curious speculation as to what Ireland and Irish art would have become had the island been remote from foreign influences. It is doubtful whether Romanesque architecture was fully developed; it is certain that Later Celtic was not. Let it be remembered that to have a perfect national art many conditions are requisite. The Jews of old had none. Growing

up as a nation in subjection they began by borrowing, and when free continued to do so. They had inspired prophets, but the inspiration of art was wanting. They built Solomon's temple, but they never produced so original a work as any ordinary Irish brooch. Yet they had the capacity to originate a style. It is perfectly comprehensible why they did not, and why Irish art perished prematurely. At the present day there are among the Jews hundreds of clever artists. The Irishman of the present day is the same in all respects as the Englishman. He distinguishes himself in the army, on the bench, in medicine, or as a merchant. There have been Irish artists of great force. But they have been merged with their English contemporaries. I do not propose to exalt Ireland through these. What I would examine is the capacity of the peasant for industrial art. If he possesses it, and if it can be developed, there exists an important element for the regeneration of Ireland.

This capacity was in his ancestors, even to a pre-eminent degree. I believe that at present it 'is not dead, but sleepeth.' No one who has ever seen the lace made by Irish peasant women, can doubt that they have an innate sense of that beauty which should inspire decoration. A generation ago the old art of carving bog-wood was revived in Dublin and its vicinity. It is practised largely by poor and ignorant people; but they execute in it work which is creditable to them, and which effectively proves that they have the capacity of which I speak. In the Industrial Art Schools of Philadelphia, of which I am Director, I have not found the children of Irish parents inferior in any respect to those of Americans. Therefore I believe that we may fairly assume that, if the proper education were given, the Irish could do as well in industrial art as the English. From their past history, and from their volatile, impressionable, and emotional nature I should not wonder, indeed, if the Irish, under the same influences, could become more truly artistic than either English or Americans. Paddy was always a bit of a Bohemian with a touch of the outlaw; it is with such that the Kingdom of Art is rather thickly populated.

One reason why little has been said or written relative to Irish art-capacity, is that the majority of the European and American world understand by art nothing but pictures, and perhaps statues; and in this, Ireland, though she has produced her full share of artists, has by their training and development been identified with England.

But *art* does not mean mere painting of pictures of men and

of landscapes. It has an infinitely wider field. At present the artist makes only *representations* of beautiful objects, when in fact he ought to be making the things themselves beautiful.

Beauty should enter into the shaping of every implement and object made by man. Every child should be trained to a perception of beauty, and to a certain degree of skill in decorative art. When this shall form a branch of education in every school, however small, the Renaissance of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries will have begun. And it is now beginning.

In this revival or creation of the practice of the minor arts as a part of the education of every child, Ireland is destined to take no ignoble part. I do not and cannot believe that the blood being the same with that of the men who a thousand years ago taught decorative art to all Europe, and gave it its very life even in the court of Charlemagne, the Irish of the present day cannot do what they did of old. Not of their race, I have an *intense* faith in the existence in it of certain very great qualities which are not dead, but sleeping. It is a fact worth noting that the hands of the Irish of the present day are said to preserve characteristics peculiar to those who excel in artistic pursuits. There is a strange and obscure legend that the rudiments of decorative art were first brought to Ireland by seven monks from Egypt. However this may be, it reminds us that for five thousand years or more the Egyptians did not change or lose in the least in their art-culture. Are not the Irish of to-day all that they were a thousand years ago?

Ireland is poor—very poor—and any kind of generally disseminated industries, so that they were barely remunerative, would be a blessing to her. The minor arts which I would introduce to all schools and households are, I admit, not among the great and staple branches of industry. They are not like agriculture, or the manufacture of clothing. But they are far from being so trifling as many have assumed when arguing with me in favour of doing nothing and of making no effort, for it is characteristic of many people, and especially of English people, to talk idly while they work hard. It is a fact that in all cities—and it goes broad and wide inland, wherever man dwells—that sixty per cent. of all good houses and what is in them, represents ornament. Perhaps, after all, no one industry, however prosaic or ‘staple,’ represents more capital than is actually employed by art—‘that dreadful art’ as Mrs. Merdle called it. But when one thinks that in this world there are many more millions of artisans than all

the population of Ireland, there is no extravagance in fully believing that at least those who in Ireland are not well supported by more substantial industry can be so by easy decorative manufactures.

There are questions which I meet at every turn: Who is to buy this decorative art-work? Who wants it? Where is the money to come from? From all that I have read of political economy, I have learned that in every community where there is a great variety of industries, and where everybody is busy, exchanges are effected, money being the medium for such exchanges. When there is an over-production or a surfeit, the market is glutted, hard times ensue, and this is a hundred times more likely to result from production by machinery than where goods are hand-made. Now, all true art-work is hand-made—for it is a misnomer, or rather a vulgar error, to call anything machine-made ‘artistic,’ however *beautiful* it may be. Fashion, guided by good taste, is very rapidly rejecting the machine-made save for articles of mere comfort. In this fact there is greater hope for the poor than in all the charities of all Europe and America.

There is a very rapidly-growing demand for the products of such decorative-art industries as the Irish are capable of producing. Let them at least be tried in what they once excelled. It will be no very expensive or difficult matter to introduce simple outline decorative design to schools, and with it easy embroidery, panel-carving, modelling for colour and glaze, and similar arts. If Irish children can execute such work in America, they can do it at home. Let it, at all events, be tried. The wood-carvers of the Tyrol and South Germany and Switzerland send their work by tons even to South America; in Russia and the East whole villages do well in leather-work; Ireland is nearer to good markets than these. Art is not only long but very varied, and if the beginning could be made I doubt not that it would lead to happy results.

I was present at the Industrial Exhibition of Irish Arts and Manufactures in Dublin, in 1871, and examined it very carefully. It was very creditable indeed, but the impression which it made was that of the work of people who had very great but undeveloped capacity for art. ‘Under a cloud,’ or ‘handicapped,’ would express the prevailing sense of drawbacks which were everywhere apparent. Now, there is really no reason why the drawbacks should not be removed. Individual effort can introduce industrial art to schools and homes, and it is a very easy thing to teach an average Irish child not only rudimentary outline design but several of the minor

arts. Now, can any one doubt that a young person who has actually mastered several minor arts, such as modelling, carving, and inlaying, would be able to earn a living by them, or, what is of much more importance, be qualified to learn some more practical trade, without much trouble? This would not, it is true, be a solution of all the troubles which weigh on Ireland, but it would go far to relieve poverty.

Ireland is ready for industrial reform, and the experiment might be begun at once. It would not cost large grants of money; it could be initiated in village schools and private circles, and taken up by individuals at little cost, and the teaching might be made to pay as it went.

CHARLES G. LELAND,

Director of the Public Industrial Art School in Philadelphia.

The Wiltshire Labourer.

TEN years have passed away, and the Wiltshire labourers have only moved in two things—education and discontent. I had the pleasure then of pointing out in ‘Fraser’ that there were causes at work promising a considerable advance in the labourers’ condition. I regret to say now that the advance, which in a measure did take place, has been checkmated by other circumstances, and there they remain much as I left them, except in book-learning and mental restlessness. They possess certain permanent improvements—unexhausted improvements, in agricultural language—but these, in some way or other, do not seem now so valuable as they looked. Ten years since important steps were being taken for the material benefit of the labouring class. Landowners had awakened to the advantage of attaching the peasantry to the soil, and were spending large sums of money building cottages. Everywhere cottages were put up on sanitary principles, so that to-day few farms on great estates are without homes for the men. This substantial improvement remains, and cannot fade away. Much building, too, was progressing about the farmsteads; the cattle-sheds were undergoing renovation, and this to some degree concerned the labourer, who now began to do more of his work under cover. The efforts of every writer and speaker in the country had not been without effect, and allotments, or large gardens, were added to most cottage homes. The movement, however, was slow, and promised more than it performed, so that there are still cottages which have not shared in it. But, on the whole, an advance in this respect did occur, and the aggregate acreage of gardens and allotments must be very considerably larger now than formerly. These are solid considerations to quote on the favourable side. I have been thinking to see if I could find anything else. I cannot call to mind anything tangible, but there is certainly more liberty, an air of freedom and independence—something more of the ‘do as I please’ feeling exhibited. Then the sum ends. At that time experiments were being tried on an extended scale in the field; such as draining, the enlarge-

ment of fields by removing hedges, the formation of private roads, the buildings already mentioned, and new systems of agriculture, so that there was a general stir and bustle which meant not only better wages but wages for more persons. The latter is of the utmost importance to the tenant-labourer, by which I mean a man who is settled, because it keeps his sons at home. Common experience all over the world has always shown that three or four or more people can mess together, as in camps, at a cheaper rate than they can live separately. If the father of the family can find work for his boys within a reasonable distance of home, with their united contributions they can furnish a very comfortable table, one to which no one could object to sit down, and then still have a sum over and above, with which to purchase clothes, and even to indulge personal fancies. Such a pleasant state of things requires that work should be plentiful in the neighbourhood. Work at that time was plentiful, and contented and even prosperous homes of this kind could be found. Here is just where the difficulty arises. From a variety of causes the work has subsided. The father of the family—the settled man, the tenant-labourer—keeps on as of yore, but the boys cannot get employment near home. They have to seek it afar, one here, one yonder—all apart, and the wages each separately receives do but just keep them in food among strangers. It is this scarcity of work which in part seems to have counterbalanced the improvements which promised so well. Instead of the progress naturally to be expected, you find the same insolvency, the same wearisome monotony of existence in debt, the same hopeless countenances and conversation.

There has been a contraction of enterprise everywhere, and a consequent diminution of employment. When a factory shuts its doors the fact is patent to all who pass. The hum of machinery is stopped and smoke no longer floats from the chimney; the building itself, large and regular—a sort of emphasised plainness of architecture—cannot be overlooked. It is evident to everyone that work has ceased, and the least reflection shows that hundreds of men, perhaps hundreds of families, are reduced from former comparative prosperity. But when ten thousand acres of land fall out of cultivation the fact is scarcely noticed. There the land is just the same, and perhaps some effort is still made to keep it from becoming altogether foul, so that a glance detects no difference. The village feels it, but the world does not see it. The farmer has left, and the money he paid over as wages once a

week is no longer forthcoming. Each man's separate portion of that sum was not much in comparison with the earnings of fortunate artisans, but it was money. Ten, twelve, or as much as fifteen shillings a week made a home; but just sufficient to purchase food and meet other requirements, such as clothes; yet still a home. On the cessation of the twelve shillings where is the labourer to find a substitute for it? Our country is limited in extent, and it has long been settled to its utmost capacity. Under present circumstances there is no room anywhere for more than the existing labouring population. It is questionable if a district could be found where, under these present circumstances, room could be found for ten more farmers' men. Only so many men can live as can be employed; in each district there are only so many farmers; they cannot enlarge their territories; and thus it is that every agricultural parish is full to its utmost. Some places among meadows appear almost empty. No one is at work in the fields as you pass; there are cattle swishing their tails in the shadow of the elms, but not a single visible person; acres upon acres of grass, and no human being. Towards the latter part of the afternoon, if the visitor has patience to wait, there will be a sound of shouting, which the cattle understand, and begin in their slow way to obey by moving in its direction. Milking time has come, and one or two men come out to fetch in the cows. That over, for the rest of the evening and till milking time in the morning the meadows will be vacant. Naturally it would be supposed that there is room here for a great number of people. Whole crowds might migrate into these grassy fields, put up shanties, and set to work. But set to work at what? That is just the difficulty; whole crowds could come here and find plenty of room to walk about—and starve! Cattle require but few to look after them; milch cattle need most, but grazing beasts practically no one, for one can look after so many. Upon inquiry it would be found that this empty parish is really quite full. Very likely there are empty cottages, and yet it is quite full. A cottage is of no use unless the occupier can obtain regular weekly wages. The farmers are already paying as many as they can find work for, and not one extra hand is wanted; except, of course, in the press of hay-harvest, but no one can settle on one month's work out of twelve. When ten or fifteen thousand acres of land fall out of cultivation, and farmers leave, what is to become of the labouring families they kept? What has become of them?

It is useless blinking the fact that what a man wants in our time is good wages, constant wages, and a chance of increasing wages. Labouring men more and more think simply of work and wages. They do not want kindness—they want coin. In this they are not altogether influenced by self-interest; they are driven rather than go of their own movement. The world pushes hard on their heels, and they must go on like the rest. A man cannot drift up into a corner of some green lane, and stay in his cottage out of the tide of life, as was once the case. The tide comes to him. He must find money somehow; the parish will not keep him on out-relief if he has no work; the rate-collector calls at his door; his children must go to school decently clad with pennies in each little hand. He must have wages. You may give him a better cottage, you may give him a large allotment, you may treat him as an equal, and all is of no avail. Circumstance—the push of the world—forces him to ask you for wages. The farmer replies that he has only work for just so many and no more. The land is full of people. Men reply in effect, ‘We cannot stay if a chance offers us to receive wages from any railway, factory, or enterprise; if wages are offered to us in the United States, there we must go.’ If they heard that in a town fifty miles distant twenty shillings could be had for labour, how many of the hale men do you suppose would stay in the village? Off they would rush to receive the twenty shillings per week, and the farmers might have the land to themselves if they liked. Eighteen shillings to a pound a week would draw off every man from agriculture, and leave every village empty. If a vast industrial combination announced regular wages of that amount for all who came, there would not be a man left in the fields out of the two millions or more who now till them.

A plan to get more wages out of the land would indeed be a wonderful success. As previously explained, it is not so much the amount paid to one individual as the paying of many individuals that is so much to be desired. Depression in agriculture has not materially diminished the sum given to a particular labourer, but it has most materially diminished the sum distributed among the numbers. One of the remarkable features of agricultural difficulties is, indeed, that the quotation of wages is nominally the same as in past years of plenty. But then not nearly so many receive them. The father of the family gets his weekly money the same now as ten years since. At that date his sons found work at home. At the present date they have to move on. Some farmer is likely to exclaim, ‘How can this be, when I cannot get

enough men when I want them?' Exactly so, but the question is not when you want *them*, but when they want you. You cannot employ them, as of old, all the year round, therefore they migrate, or move to and fro, and at harvest time may be the other side of the county.

The general aspect of country life was changing fast enough before the depression came. Since then it has continued to alter at an increasing rate—a rate accelerated by education; for I think education increases the struggle for more wages. As a man grows in social stature so he feels the want of little things which it is impossible to enumerate, but which in the aggregate represent a considerable sum. Knowledge adds to a man's social stature, and he immediately becomes desirous of innumerable trifles which, in ancient days, would have been deemed luxuries, but which now seem very commonplace. He wants somewhat more fashionable clothes, and I use the word fashion in association with the ploughman purposely, for he and his children do follow the fashion now in as far as they can, once a week at least. He wants a newspaper—only a penny a week, but a penny is a penny. He thinks of an excursion like the artisan in towns. He wants his boots to shine as workmen's boots shine in towns, and must buy blacking. Very likely you laugh at the fancy of shoe-blackening having anything to do with the farm labourer and agriculture. But I can assure you it means a good deal. He is no longer satisfied with the grease his forefathers applied to their boots; he wants them to shine and reflect. For that he must, too, have lighter boots, not the heavy, old, clod-hopping watertights made in the village. If he retains these for week-days he likes a shiny pair for Sundays. Here is the cost, then, of an additional pair of shoes; this is one of the many trifles the want of which accompanies civilisation. Once now and then he writes a letter, and must have pen, ink, and paper; only a pennyworth, but then a penny is a coin when the income is twelve or fourteen shillings a week. He likes a change of hats—a felt at least for Sunday. He is not happy till he has a watch. Many more such little wants will occur to anyone who will think about them, and they are the necessary attendants upon an increase of social stature. To obtain them the young man must have money—coins, shillings, and pence. His thoughts, therefore, are bent on wages; he must get wages somewhere, not merely to live, for bread, but for these social necessities. That he can live at home with his family, that in time he may get a cottage of his

own, that cottages are better now, large gardens given, that the labourer is more independent—all these and twenty other considerations—all these are nothing to him, because they are not to be depended on. Wages paid weekly are his aim, and thus it is that education increases the value of a weekly stipend, and increases the struggle for it by sending so many more into the ranks of competitors. I cannot see myself why, in the course of a little time, we may not see the sons of ploughmen competing for clerkships, situations in offices of various kinds, the numerous employments not of a manual character. So good is the education they receive, that, if only their personal manners happen to be pleasant, they have as fair a chance of getting such work as others.

Ceaseless effort to obtain wages causes a drifting about of the agricultural population. The hamlets and villages, though they seem so thinly inhabited, are really full, and every extra man and youth, finding themselves unable to get the weekly stipend at home, travel away. Some go but a little distance, some across the width of the country, a few emigrate, though not so many as would be expected. Some float up and down continually, coming home to their native parish for a few weeks, and then leaving it again. A restlessness permeates the ranks; few but those with families will hire for the year. They would rather do anything than that. Family men must do so because they require cottages, and four out of six cottages belong to the landowners and are part and parcel of the farms. The activity in cottage building, to which reference has been made, as prevailing ten or twelve years since, was solely on the part of the landowners. There were no independent builders; I mean the cottages were not built by the labouring class. They are let by farmers to those labourers who engage for the year, and if they quit this employment they quit their houses. Hence it is that even the labourers who have families are not settled men in the full sense, but are liable to be ordered on if they do not give satisfaction, or if cause of quarrel arises. The only settled men—the only fixed population in villages and hamlets at the present day—is that small proportion who possess cottages of their own. This proportion varies, of course, but it is always small. Of old times, when it was the custom for men to stay all their lives in one district, and to work for one farmer quite as much for payment in kind as for the actual wages, this made little difference. Very few men once settled in regular employment moved again; they and their families

remained for many years as stationary as if the cottage was their property, and frequently their sons succeeded to the place and work. Now in these days the custom of long service has rapidly disappeared. There are many reasons, the most potent, perhaps, the altered tone of the entire country. It boots little to inquire into the causes. The fact is, then, that no men, not even with families, will endure what once they did. If the conditions are arbitrary, or they consider they are not well used, or they hear of better terms elsewhere, they will risk it and go. So, too, farmers are more given to changing their men than was once the case, and no longer retain the hereditary faces about them. The result is that the fixed population may be said to decline every year. The total population is probably the same, but half of it is nomad. It is nomad for two reasons—because it has no home, and because it must find wages.

Farmers can only pay so much in wages and no more; they are at the present moment really giving higher wages than previously, though nominally the same in amount. The wages are higher judged in relation to the price of wheat; that is, to their profits. If coal falls in price, the wages of coal-miners are reduced. Now, wheat has fallen heavily in price, but the wages of the labourer remain the same, so that he is, individually, when he has employment, receiving a larger sum. Probably if farming accounts were strictly balanced, and farming like any other business, that sum would be found to be more than the business would bear. No trace of oppression in wages can be found. The farmer gets allowances from his landlord, and he allows something to his labourers, and so the whole system is kept up by mutual understanding. Except under a very important rise in wheat, or a favourable change in the condition of agriculture altogether, it is not possible for the farmers to add another sixpence either to the sum paid to the individual or to the sum paid in the aggregate to the village.

Therefore, as education increases—and it increases rapidly—as the push of the world reaches the hamlet; as the labouring class increase in social stature, and twenty new wants are found; as they come to look forth upon matters in a very different manner to their stolid forefathers; it is evident that some important problems will arise in the country. The question will have to be asked: Is it better for this population to be practically nomad or settled? How is livelihood—*i.e.* wages—to be found for it? Can anything be substituted for wages? Or must we devise a

gigantic system of emigration, and in a twelvemonth (if the people took it up) have every farmer crying out that he was ruined, he could never get his harvest in. I do not think myself that the people could be induced to go under any temptation. They like England in despite of their troubles. If the farmer could by any happy means find out some new plant to cultivate, and so obtain a better profit and be able to give wages to more hands, the nomad population would settle itself somehow, if in mud huts. No chance of that is in sight at present. So we are forced round to the consideration of a substitute for wages.

Now, ten or twelve years since, when much activity prevailed in all things agricultural, it was proposed to fix the labouring population to the soil by building better cottages, giving them large gardens and allotments, and various other privileges. This was done; and in 'Fraser' I did not forget to credit the good intent of those who did it. Yet now we see, ten years afterwards, that instead of fixing the population, the population becomes more wandering. Why is this? Why have not these cottages and allotments produced their expected effect? There seems but one answer—that it is the lack of fixity of tenure. All these cottages and allotments have only been held on sufferance, on good behaviour, and hence they have failed. For even for material profit in the independent nineteenth century men do not care to be held on their good behaviour. A contract must be free and equal on both sides to be respected. To illustrate the case, suppose that some large banking institution in London gave out as a law that all the employés must live in villas belonging to the bank, say at Norwood. There they could have very good villas, and gardens attached, and on payment even paddocks, and there they could dwell so long as they remained in the office. But the instant any cause of disagreement arose they must quit not only the office but their homes. What an outcry would be raised against bank managers' tyranny were such a custom to be introduced! The extreme hardship of having to leave the house on which so much trouble had been expended, the garden carefully kept up and planted, the paddock; to leave the neighbourhood where friends had been found, and which suited the constitution and where the family were healthy. Fancy the stir there would be, and the public meetings to denounce the harsh interference with liberty! Yet, with the exception that the clerk might have 300*l.* a year and the labourer 12*s.* or 14*s.* a week, the cases would be exactly parallel. The labourer has no fixity of tenure. He

does not particularly care to lay himself out to do his best in the field or for his master, because he is aware that service is no inheritance, and at any moment circumstances may arise which may lead to his eviction. For it is really eviction, though unaccompanied by the suffering associated with the word—I was going to write ‘abroad’ for in Ireland. So that all the sanitary cottages erected at such expense, and all the large gardens and the allotments offered, have failed to produce a contented and settled working population. Most people are familiar by this time with the demand of the tenant farmers for some exalted kind of compensation which in effect is equivalent to tenant right, *i.e.* to fixity of tenure. Without this, we have all been pretty well informed by now, it is impossible for farmers to flourish, since they cannot expend capital unless they feel certain of getting it back again. This is precisely the case with the labourer. His labour is his capital, and he cannot expend it in one district unless he is assured of his cottage and garden, that is, of his homestead and farm. You cannot have a fixed population unless it has a home, and the labouring population is practically homeless. There appears no possibility of any real amelioration of their condition until they possess settled places of abode. Till then they must move to and fro, and increase in restlessness and discontent. Till then they must live in debt, from hand to mouth, and without hope of growth in material comfort. A race for ever trembling on the verge of the workhouse cannot progress and lay up for itself any saving against old age. Such a race is feeble and lacks cohesion, and does not afford that backbone an agricultural population should afford to the country at large. At the last, it is to the countryman, to the ploughman, and ‘the farmer’s boy,’ that a land in difficulty looks for help. They are the last line of defence—the reserve, the rampart of the nation. Our last line at present is all unsettled and broken up, and has lost its firm and solid front. Without homes, how can its ranks ever become firm and solid again?

An agricultural labourer entering on a cottage and garden with his family, we will suppose, is informed that so long as he pays his rent he will not be disturbed. He then sets to work in his off hours to cultivate his garden and his allotment; he plants fruit trees; he trains a creeper over his porch. His boys and girls have a home whenever out of service, and when they are at home they can assist in cultivating their father’s little property. The family has a home and a centre, and there it will remain for

generations. Such is certainly the case wherever a labourer has a cottage of his own. The family inherit it for generations; it would not be difficult to find cases in which occupation has endured for a hundred years. There is no danger now of the younger members of the family staying too much at home. The pressure of circumstances is too strong, as already explained; all the tendencies of the time are such as would force them from home in search of wages. There is no going back, they must push forwards.

The cottage-tenure, like the farm-tenure, must come from the landlord, of course. All movements must fall on the landlord unless they are made imperial questions. It is always the landowner who has to bear the burden in the end. As the cottages belong to the landowners, fixity or certainty of tenure is like taking their rights from them. But not more so than in the case of the exalted compensation called tenant-right. Indeed, I think I shall show that the change would be quite trifling beside measures which deal with whole properties at once, of five, ten, or twenty thousand acres, as the case may be. For, in the first place, let note be taken of a most important circumstance—which is that at the present time these cottages let on sufferance do not bring in one shilling to the landlord. They are not the least profit to him. He does not receive the nominal rent, and if he did, of what value would be so insignificant a sum, the whole of which for a year would not pay a tenth part of the losses sustained by the failure of one tenant farmer. As a fact, then, the cottages are of no money value to the landowner. A change, therefore, in the mode of tenure could not affect the owner like a change in the tenure of a great farm, say at a rental of 1,500*l*. Not having received any profit from the previous tenure of cottages, he suffers no loss if the tenure be varied. The advantage the landowner is supposed to enjoy from the possession of cottages scattered about his farms is that the tenants thereby secure men to do their work. This advantage would be much better secured by a resident and settled population. Take away the conventional veil with which the truth is usually flimsily hidden, and the fact is that the only objection to a certain degree of fixity in cottage tenure is that it would remove from the farmer the arbitrary power he now possesses of eviction. What loss there would be in this way it is not easy to see, since, as explained, the men must have wages, and can only get them from farmers, to whom therefore they must resort. But then the man knows the power to give such notice is there, and it does not agree with the feelings of the

nineteenth century. No loss whatever would accrue either to landowner or tenant from a fixed population. A farmer may say, 'But suppose the man who has my cottage will not work for me?' To this I reply, that if the district is so short of cottages that it is possible for a farmer to be short of hands, the sooner pressure is applied in some way, and others built, the better for landowner, tenant, and labourer. If there is sufficient habitation for the number of men necessary for cultivating the land, there will be no difficulty because one particular labourer will not work for one particular farmer. That labourer must then do one of two things, he must starve or work for some other farmer, where his services would dispossess another labourer, who would immediately take the vacant place. The system of employing men on sufferance, and keeping them, however mildly, under the thumb, is a system totally at variance with the tenets of our time. It is a most expensive system and ruinous to true self-respect, inasmuch as it tends to teach the labourer's children that the only way they can show the independence of their thought is by impertinent language. How much better for a labourer to be perfectly free—how much better for an employer to have a man to work for him quite outside any suspicion of sufferance, or of being under his thumb! I should not like men under my thumb; I should like to pay them for their work, and there let the contract end, as it ends in all other businesses. As more wages cannot be paid, the next best thing, perhaps the absolutely necessary thing, is a fixed home.

I think it would pay any landowner to let all the cottages upon his property to the labourers themselves direct, exactly as farms are let, giving them security of tenure so long as rent was forthcoming, with each cottage to add a large garden, or allotment, up to, say, two acres, at an agricultural and not an accommodation rent. Most gardens and allotments are let as a favour at a rent about three times, and in some cases even six times, the agricultural rent of the same soil in adjoining fields. Cottagers do not look upon such tenancies—held, too, on sufferance—as a favour or kindness, and feel no gratitude nor any attachment to those who permit them to dig and delve at thrice the charge the farmer pays. Add to these cottages gardens, not necessarily adjoining them but as near as circumstances allow, up to two acres at a purely agricultural rental. If, in addition, facilities were to be given for the gradual purchase of the freehold by the labourer on the same terms as are now frequently held out by building

societies, it would be still better. I think it would turn out for the advantage of landowner, tenant, and the country at large to have a settled agricultural population.

The limit of two acres I mention, not that there is any especial virtue in that extent of land, but because I do not think the labourer would profit by having more, since he must then spend his whole time cultivating his plot. Experience has proved over and over again that for a man in England to live by spade-husbandry on four or five acres of land is the most miserable existence possible. He can but just scrape a living, he is always failing, his children are in rags, and debt ultimately consumes him. He is of no good either to himself or to others or to the country. For in our country agriculture, whether by plough or spade, is confined to three things, to grass, corn, or cattle, and there is no plant like the vine by which a small proprietor may prosper. Wet seasons come, and see—even the broad acres cultivated at such an expense of money produce nothing, and the farmer comes to the verge of ruin. But this verge of ruin to the small proprietor who sees his four acres of crops destroyed means simple extinction. So that the amount of land to be of advantage is that amount which the cottager can cultivate without giving his entire time to it; so that, in fact, he may also earn wages.

To landowner and farmer the value of a fixed population like this, fixed and independent, and looking only for payment for what was actually done, and not for eleemosynary earnings, would be, I think, very great. There would be a constant supply of first-class labour available all the year round. A supply of labour on an estate is like water-power in America—indispensable. But if you have no resident supply you face two evils, you must pay extra to keep men there when you have no real work for them to do, or you must offer fancy wages in harvest. Now, I think a resident population would do the same work if not at less wages at the time of the work, yet for less money, taking the year through.

I should be in hopes that such a plan would soon breed a race of men of the sturdiest order, the true and natural countrymen; men standing upright in the face of all, without one particle of servility; paying their rates, and paying their rents; absolutely civil and pleasant-mannered, because, being really independent, they would need no impudence of tongue to assert what they did not feel; men giving a full day's work for a full day's wages (which is now seldom seen); men demanding to be paid in full for full

work, but refusing favours and petty assistance to be recouped hereafter; able to give their children a fixed home to come back to; able even to push them in life if they wish to leave employment on the land; men with the franchise, voting under the protection of the ballot, and voting first and foremost for the demolition of the infernal poor-law and workhouse system.

The men are there. This is no imaginary class to be created, they are there, and they only require homes to become the finest body in the world, a rampart to the nation, a support not only to agriculture but to every industry that needs the help of labour. For physique they have ever been noted, and if it is not valued at home it is estimated at its true value in the colonies. From Australia, America, all countries desiring sinews and strength, come earnest persuasions to these men to emigrate. They are desired above all others as the very foundation of stability. It is only at home that the agricultural labourer is despised. If ever there were grounds for that contempt in his illiterate condition they have disappeared. I have always maintained that intelligence exists outside education, that men who can neither read nor write often possess good natural parts. The labourer at large possesses such parts, but until quite lately he has had no opportunity of displaying them. Of recent years he or his children have had an opportunity of displaying their natural ability, since education was brought within reach of them all. Their natural power has at once shown itself, and all the young men and young women are now solidly educated. The reproach of being illiterate can no longer be hurled at them. They never were illiterate mentally; they are now no more illiterate in the partial sense of book-knowledge. A young agricultural labourer to-day can speak almost as well as the son of a gentleman. There is, of course, a little of the country accent remaining, and some few technical words are in use; why should they not be? Do not gentlemen on the Exchange use technical terms? I cannot see myself that 'contango' is any better English, or 'backwardation' more indicative of intelligence, than the terms used in the field. The labourer of to-day reads, and thinks about what he reads. The young, being educated, have brought education to their parents, the old have caught the new tone from the young. It is acknowledged that the farm labourer is the most peaceful of all men, the least given to agitation for agitation's sake. Permit him to live and he is satisfied. He has no class ill-feeling, either against farmer or landowner, and he resists all attempts to intro-

duce ill-feeling. He maintains a steady and manly attitude, calm, and considering, without a trace of hasty revolutionary sentiments. I say that such a race of men are not to be despised; I say that they are the very foundation of a nation's stability; I say that in common justice they deserve settled homes; and further, that as a matter of sound policy they should be provided with them.

RICHARD JEFFERIES.

Love at First Sight.

ONCE upon a summer day
 In the pleasant German-land,
 Earth and I, serenely gay,
 Smiling comrades hand in hand,

On a Kursaal's step I stood
 With no eager thoughts at strife,
 In a lotus-eating mood,
 Passively accepting life.

As she came the earth was full
 Of a radiance divine ;
 As she went the earth was dull
 And the sun forgot to shine.

As she came my heart beat high,
 Singing an unwonted strain ;
 As she went the pulses sigh
 Slowly, slowly back again.

Of the many shams of earth
 Chiefest folly and disgrace
 Hold I love, that owes its birth
 To a trick of form and face.

Love, forsooth ! a mere pretence
 Boys or fools may touch with ease
 But *I know* the man of sense
 Only loves by slow degrees :

Knowing this, I follow her
In the safety of my sense
(Strange so slight a thing can stir
With a pleasure so immense);

Follow through the shining grove
(For the very trees are bright),
With a little laugh at love
And a shiver of delight;

Follow through the sparkling morn
Where the rosy blossoms lie,
With a wonder and a scorn
For the men who pass her by.

Like a little silent breeze
Glides she through the empty space:
Sweet it is how steps like these
Dignify the meanest place;

Sweet, tho' all the world condemn,
Bearing censure for their sake,
If I only follow them
With no hope to overtake.

And the flowers turn away
In an envy of her grace;
And the butterflies delay,
Quite enchanted with her face.

Airily she trips along
Till the very birds confer
And the woods break into song
With a glory, all for her.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

Follow, follow, following,
 Through the shadow and the gleam—
 Lo! the sprite has taken wing,
 Vanish'd like a lovely dream!

* * * * *

Vanish'd from my startled eyes!
 Did the jealous flowers slay?
 Did the loving butterflies
 Bear her on their wings away?

Heavens of unshatter'd blue,
 Perfect earth, I round me see:
 Am I not content with you?
 Are you not enough for me?

Then a bird upon a bough
 Fix'd me with his shining eye,
 And his song—I know not how—
 Pierc'd my heart—I know not why.

THE BIRD'S SONG.

The earth is alight
 With a glittering dew,
 That falls from high heaven
 For me and for you.
 I sit by a nest
 That I built in a tree,
 And I know that the light is
 For you and for me.

The sky is afar
 And the earth is anear,
 And each hath a secret
 That neither may hear.

I am but a bird,
I do nothing but sing;
And I know that the light is
A wonderful thing.

Why beateth my heart?
Why soundeth my song?
The zenith is fading,
The distance is long.
Life is within me
Unsought and unknown,
But the blue distant heaven
Is only my own.

I am but a bird,
I do nothing but sing;
I wait through the winter
For beautiful spring.
And earth at my feet
Through the glittering dew
Is joyfully waiting,
Dear heaven, for you!

Music floating from a tree,
Forming into shapely words,
Hath a meaning unto me
That perchance is not the bird's.

That perchance is not?—or is?
Whence hath the perception come?
For to-day a voice is his
That but yesterday was dumb

Or to-day a heaven-light
Strikes my heart with rapture keen
Sharply bringing into sight
All that any bird can mean.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

Whence the joy that fills my breast,
Passionate and innocent ?
And the yearning and the rest ?
And the senseless sweet content ?

Woods are wrapp'd in lustrous green,
Skies have caught a wonder-bliss.
Bird, I know not what you mean ;
Wherefore sing to me like this ?

Is my heart subdued at length,
Vanquish'd without sign or word—
I, in manhood's matchless strength,
At the mercy of a bird ?

Day is long and night is long ;
As the bloom upon a peach,
As the flitting of a song,
Twilight fades away in each.

Childhood is eternal spring,
Age refills the heart anew ;
Youth is such a little thing,
But a link between the two.

Past is vast and Future vast,
And the Present is so small ;
Will the Present never last ?
Is transition all in all ?

The Has-been above us towers,
The Will-be has all things in it,
But the Is alone is ours,
And the Is is but a minute.

AUTHOR OF 'MRS. JERNINGHAM'S JOURNAL.'

The Children of the Mist.

MIST is a much worse enemy to the deerstalker on the East Coast, in the neighbourhood of Lochnagar, Glen Muick, and Caenlochan, than towards the Atlantic seaboard. Granted that for a month without ceasing the rain may pour down among the Western hills, yet the weather, though undeniably dark and depressing, is as often as not quite clear. But on the high fastnesses of Clova and Lochnagar the mist will lie for ten days or even a fortnight without ever lifting, chill, clammy, and productive of despair. The higher tops are wrapped in one sullen and impenetrable gloom, but it is not till the sportsman, undaunted alike by experience and by the voice of reason, has gone up the hillface into the regions of seafog and mist, that he can realise once more how hopelessly dense the atmosphere has become.

I have a pleasing recollection of one October day in Glen Cally, how we were completely deceived by the comparative lightness of the lower slopes on the forest. We had a visitor with us, a novice at the forest craft, and as eager for blood as a half-starved ferret. Well, of course we wanted to show him the fun, if there was any to be had; so we drove off in the trap to Charlie's shieling, about four miles up the glen, in the face of one of the most unpromising mornings that it has ever been my lot to be out in. A still small rain was falling, so small as to be all but invisible; but, close and continuous, it soon found its way down our collars and trickled erelong over our manly bosoms. But, though we certainly could not see one vestige of the more commanding hills on either hand as we drove along, yet we flattered ourselves that the mist was gradually rising up the mountain-side, and that when we were once on the tops it would have cleared off sufficiently for a very fair view over our ground. The wish, I fear, was father to that thought, and, looking back at the day's work, I now could desire that the thought had had some more substantial progenitor.

As we clambered over the palings into the enclosure that surrounded the Stalker's cottage, Charlie himself came out with a most lugubrious but at the same time conciliatory expression. He felt that he had to deal with two young madmen who could

venture out in such weather; for his own sake, therefore, he evidently thought it best to humour us, so far as his powers went, lest, disappointed of our thirst for blood elsewhere, Daunt and I should make a savage attack upon him, and he accordingly came forward, apologetically rubbing his hands, from which the wet simply poured off, and groaning out: 'Losh me! it's just waur than useless the day whaiver. It will never be your will to go up the glen to-day. Ye'll just put the deer away and never see them in the mist.'

'Charlie, my man,' said I, with all the grave dignity that my damp appearance would permit me to assume, 'I have the greatest regard for you personally and for your health. But if we are not moving up the Cally Burn in something less than two minutes, I fear there will be trouble.'

Awed by this lordly demeanour, Charlie wasted no more time in speeches, but dragged out the deer-saddle, which we soon hoisted up on to the pony, reluctant though it was to leave the paddock grass, and then we started at first along the burn, but soon leaving it to strike up the slopes of the Hill of Badeney, which on ordinary days gave us our first vantage-ground for spying. But as we climbed higher up the hillsides the mist lay ever more thickly around us till we couldn't see a knoll more than forty yards away. We lay still for an hour and a half at the top in the murky atmosphere and drizzling rain till we were chilled to the bone; for we were lying on an exposed face, and the sough of the wild autumn wind played dolefully about our ears, and every now and then athwart the breeze came a wail like that of a lost spirit. It was an awful day.

I had attempted at the first to keep up heart in the party by telling of halcyon days in September, when, after a clear night of frost that had just blackened the potato tops in the fields beside the Isla, the sun had risen in all its splendour over the glen; when far away we could dimly discern the towering peaks of Ben-y-Gloe himself in a mild and misty haze; and how, too, at the close of a glorious day, we had successfully stalked and slain a fine ten-pointer upon the Caenlochan marches against the fence, the westerling sun throwing him out into grand relief against the sky. But such reminiscences seemed but to heighten our present discomfort; the contrast between the wet and peaty teller and his tale was all too glaring, and after a while we lapsed into moody silence.

The situation was getting past a joke, and our circulations had stiffened into utter numbness, when we decided to change our

tactics and wait no longer. The word was passed: 'Best foot foremost, and downhill again we go, till at any rate we can obtain some pretence of a spy round.' Glad to be moving again. Charlie, with a serene look as of resignation to great evils, pocketed his damp ineffectual pipe, and led the way at a great pace down the slopes, till we got below the pall of mist and could take a spy in the direction of the White Craig beyond the burn. Though hope is said to spring eternal in the human breast, I was pretty well disgusted with my folly in letting Daunt begin forest work on such a day, and after a very cursory glance round with my own glass, I shut it up and began talking as Charlie spied. But after a minute or two I became conscious that the latter's telescope, instead of roving from point to point, was suspiciously stationary upon his knee, and I cried out, 'What is it now, Charlie? Have you spotted a hillfox or an eagle again, as you did last week, and made me think it was deer that you had in view?'

'Aweel no, sir,' was the leisurely response in a tone that apparently evinced the most complete unconcern; 'it's no that exactly the day. I'm seeing deer at the foot of the White Craig. Tak' the glass yoursel' and have a squint at them. There's deer worth stalking amang yon herd.'

Listlessness and languor fled at the first sound of the Stalker's measured words, and I seized the glass from him with sudden recovery of spirits. Far away beneath us across the burn I saw the herd, and as I steadied the glass and strained my eyes I soon made out three fine stags among the deer, their necks now swollen with roaring and their forms gaunt and black with rolling amid the peat-hags, as in 'October month' they delight to do. Dangerously near the mist as our deer were, it did not at present envelope them; and seeing deer at all on such an abominable day gave the old hands fresh courage for the chase, and roused the dormant bloodthirstiness of our novice to fever-heat.

And away we tore down the rest of the slope, nor did we halt till we reached the burn, which was in summer but a tiny stream, but now, swollen with the rains of autumn, ran down red and turbid in full spate. A little caution in our footing, however, soon put us on the further side with no more adventure than a wetting to our knees, which in our condition then we hardly felt. We went at more sober speed up the opposite face; but the wind was fair, and the distance reasonable, so that three-quarters of an hour later we were peering cautiously over the last knoll that hid us from view of the White Craig; but the 'Children of the Mist'

were no longer where we had last seen them, and the clouds of white vapour filled the upper air and veiled the higher slopes.

An anxious half-hour followed, lest we had put the deer away by some mischance, without noticing their abrupt departure. But at last there came for a few moments a kindly break in the mist, when the whole atmosphere seemed for a while to lighten, and the mist itself dissolved, as if by magic, into a myriad vaporous wreaths that chased each other across the heathery slopes in an infinite diversity of form; and ever and anon the Hill of the White Craig stood out clear to view for an instant, only again to be concealed as the ghostly mist-forms hurried by.

Then an angry bellow rang out with a startling suddenness through the chill grey air, and a fine stag stepped down from the higher curtain of mist into the more open air in angry pursuit of one of his weaker brethren, but soon desisted in deference to the nimbler heels of the young and despicable offender. One by one the whole herd came before our often interrupted view. They were feeding slowly up the slopes towards the mist, and for a while we only saw the rearguard of the herd, some half-dozen of the smaller stags, which kept by themselves for the most part, though now and then they ran in upon the hinds, only to be repulsed by the majestic if short-lived onslaught of one of our three big friends who guarded their joint harem most vigilantly.

One only course was open to us as matters now stood, and that was to follow in upon them as speedily as our legs would take us, before the mist again practically annihilated the deer. And in taking that course we should have to trust to luck rather than to judgment for the avoidance of detection on our way. Charlie, among whose faults indecision cannot be reckoned, started out from the knoll at once, with the rifles well forward and half out of their cases, and, our star being still in the ascendant, we got over some awkward ground without the keen-sighted and ever suspicious hinds noticing that some unwelcome callers were putting in an unlooked-for appearance. A few moments later, and we were but two hundred yards behind the smaller stags, who were just then much agitated and dancing merrily about the hinds. Amid torrents of rain we then dropped into a peat-drain that put us fifty yards further on the way that we would go, and utterly failed to make us any dirtier than we were before. Three pairs of keen and restless eyes then glowered over the heathery tussocks above the drain, and the owner of one of the aforesaid pairs became instantly aware of a grand eleven-pointer, if not a 'Royal,' standing

out alone and barely 150 yards away. He was with infinite care and tenderness endeavouring to aid his rifle in a strategical movement to the front, so as to rest upon a mightily convenient bit of granite, when a cold breath of wind swept across our faces, and the mist came down like a sheet! Not a deer was to be seen.

'We're done!' ejaculated that poor-spirited Charlie; 'we may just gae hame at once.'

'Come on,' I hissed, 'come on; run in upon them under cover of the mist, and see if we can't get our shot yet.'

And we rose hastily to our feet, leapt from out the sheltering peat-drain, and made off with all speed that we could muster to the spot where last we had seen the deer. I felt a heavy touch on my shoulder, and 'Down, mon, down! there's the deer before us noo,' mutters Charlie hoarsely, not a moment too soon, as three or four moving forms are 'dimly to be descried' immediately in front of us.

'It's no manner of use,' he whispers, 'poking about for stags; just take that nearest one, him with his head up noo and looking this way, though it may be naething but a hind.'

The rifle comes hurriedly forward to my shoulder. There is an almost inaudible click as the hammer is raised, nothing to alarm the now motionless form barely twenty yards away, yet nearly invisible in this uncanny weather. Both my elbows rest beautifully in the heather, and I never took a fairer aim. As the first finger closes softly upon the yielding trigger, and the hammer falls, a rough hand knocks the barrels upwards, and the bullet screams far up into the air *en route* for Lochnagar, as Charlie, nearly beside himself with rage and the knowledge that he will never hear the last of this adventure, bawls out, 'Dom the whole thing—it's sheep!'

E. LENNOX PEEL.

The Relation of Darwinism to other Branches of Science.

IT was in the year 1831 that a naval expedition sailed from Devonport. That expedition consisted of a single vessel, Her Majesty's ship *Beagle*, a ten-gun brig under the command of Captain Fitzroy, R.N. The *Beagle* was a stout old wooden ship, destined on this occasion for a most pacific enterprise. Her duty was to survey parts of the coast of South America and some islands in the Pacific, and to carry a chain of chronometrical measurements round the world. Five years later the *Beagle* returned from this cruise, and thus brought to a close one of the most remarkable voyages that can be found in the annals of the British navy. Now, why was the cruise of the *Beagle* of such unparalleled importance? There have been many other surveying expeditions quite as successful. No doubt the memorable voyage of the *Challenger* accomplished much more surveying than the voyage of the *Beagle*. But we are gradually learning that even such achievements as those of the *Challenger* must sink into insignificance when compared with the voyage of the *Beagle*. I would rather liken the voyage of the *Beagle* to the immortal voyage of Columbus. In each case a new world was discovered.

When the voyage of the *Beagle* was planned, the captain expressed a wish that some scientific observer should join the expedition. A young naturalist, eager to see the glories of the tropics, volunteered his services and was accepted. He sailed in the ship. For the whole five years he diligently sought every opportunity to gain a knowledge of nature. He pondered on that knowledge when he came home. He added to it by further observation and matured it by careful thought. After many years of labour and of thought the naturalist of the *Beagle* produced a book. The name of the book was the 'Origin of Species,' the name of the author was Charles Darwin.

The 'Origin of Species' appeared when I was a student in

¹ A Lecture delivered at the Midland Institute, Birmingham, on November 20, 1882.

college, and I can recall at this day the intense delight with which I read it. I was an instantaneous convert to the new doctrines, and I have felt their influence so much during all my subsequent life that I have ventured to choose this subject as the one on which to address you this evening. And here let me hasten to anticipate an objection. It is in the domain of natural history that the great achievements of Darwin have been wrought. It might be urged that the discussion of such a subject lay within the province of biologists or of geologists, but could hardly be considered a legitimate enterprise for those whose studies led them in other directions. But this is a view from which I dissent. I cannot admit the 'Origin of Species' to be the exclusive property of biologists. In a more capacious view of the subject it will be seen that the great doctrine of Evolution is of the very loftiest significance, and soars far above the distinction between one science and another to which we are accustomed.

It is interesting to note the wondrous change that is taking place, I might almost say that has taken place, in the popular estimate of the Darwinian theory. It has been well said that a new theory has often to run through three different phases. In the first place, every one exclaims that the theory is not true; then it is urged that the theory is contrary to religion; and, lastly, that everybody knew it long ago. The great doctrine of natural selection promulgated by Darwin has run through these courses. At its first publication it was received with an outburst of incredulity among the unthinking part of the community. Every one recollects the denunciations it received and the ridicule which the new doctrine had to encounter. But the theory of Darwin has survived that stage. It has also survived the attacks of those who denounce the theory as contrary to religion. The truth inherent in the principles of Darwin has quietly brushed aside such opposition, and now we hear but little of it. The funeral of Darwin at Westminster Abbey must be regarded as marking a momentous epoch in the history of thought. That the great doctrine would some day be accepted was a necessary truth, but I do not think that any one who recollects the publication of the 'Origin of Species' could then have anticipated the enormous change in educated opinion which the next quarter of a century was to disclose. Still less likely would it have seemed that the whole nation would have so far acknowledged Darwin that with one accord they demanded that his remains should be interred in the national mausoleum.

Darwin has worked out one of the most splendid details in the history of the universe. His methods and his theory have intimate connections with other branches of science, and some of these it is our object to consider in this discourse. In particular I propose to sketch the position which the Darwinian theory occupies with reference to a celebrated branch of astronomical speculation.

The sun is hot and the sun is pouring forth heat. Now heat, we know, is capable of measurement; quantities of heat can be measured as accurately as tons of coal. The daily outflow of heat from the sun is as measurable a quantity as the daily outflow of gas from the gas-works. The total amount of heat which the sun pours forth cannot, it is true, be very accurately estimated by our present knowledge. All that we are here concerned to know is that it is of the most stupendous magnitude. Even the daily consumption of the sun's heat by the earth is enormous; but that is only a minute fraction, less, indeed, than the 2,000-millionth part of the total torrent which pours from the sun. Sir John Herschel gave an elegant illustration of the splendid extravagance of the sun's daily expenditure. Suppose, he said, that a cylindrical glacier of ice, 45 miles in diameter, were to be incessantly darted into the sun with the velocity of light, about 180,000 miles in a second, the entire of this ice would be continuously liquefied by the daily radiation of heat.

It is a momentous question to inquire what replenishes the heat of the sun, or whether the sun's heat is ever replenished at all. Mark the significant consequence which is at issue. If the sun be not replenished, then its heat must gradually wane. Various sources of replenishment have been suggested. It would be leaving my present subject too far on one side to attempt to discuss this subject in any detail, but I must briefly indicate the resolutions that have been proposed. Every one is acquainted with the pleasing phenomenon of shooting stars which dash into our air with a train of light and sparks. Every shooting star is thus a source of heat: the heat is produced by the friction of the air against the rapidly moving body. The shooting stars fall into the earth's atmosphere by thousands and by millions. It is believed that they fall into the sun in vastly greater numbers. They must rain in on the sun with a profusion corresponding to his vast surface, and with a velocity corresponding to his intense power of attraction. Each shooting star develops vastly more heat at its plunge into the sun than it would have done had it fallen upon the earth. The heat derived from

all the shooting stars which fall upon the earth is utterly insignificant, but it may be that the heat from the torrent of shooting stars which rain in upon the sun is not insignificant. It may reach very large proportions. Some have, indeed, supposed that the influx of heat to the sun from the perennial showers of shooting stars is adequate to compensate for the loss of heat which the sun sustains by his incessant radiation. I do not believe that this view can be even approximately correct. No one will deny that the descent of meteors contributes *some* heat to the sun; but what we do deny is, that the quantity of heat thus acquired is at all comparable with the colossal daily expenditure. The whole question is to a great extent merely one of calculation. It can be shown that a certain quantity of meteors would suffice, but that quantity is enormously great. If the sun swallowed up every century a mighty host of meteors so numerous and so heavy that their collective mass was equal to that of our entire earth, then the view I am attempting to confute would be maintained. But a little consideration will show that the existence of so mighty a quantity of meteoric matter as this would require lies far beyond all reasonable probability. It should be remembered that the sun could only absorb each year a very small fraction of the total number of meteors that are roaming through the system. If, therefore, the meteors were as abundant as this supposition would require, the whole solar system would teem with them to an incredible extent. It therefore seems certain that the heat of the sun cannot be entirely sustained by the influx of meteoric matter.

If the sun were merely like a vast incandescent mass of stone or of metal, it would cool at the rate of 5° or 10° a year. A few thousand years would reduce it to such a degree that it would no longer be the source of light and of heat, which it certainly has been for thousands of years. At first sight it would seem as if the result at which we have arrived is paradoxical, but this is not really the case. I cannot now attempt to go fully into the matter. It may be sufficient to state generally that the sun is really parting with its heat, but that the rate at which heat is lost is affected by a special and very remarkable property. As the sun loses heat it contracts, and in the act of contraction heat is developed. The heat thus developed ekes out the sun's resources, so that the losses due to radiation are partly compensated. The result of the whole inquiry can be very easily stated, and it embraces a truth of which it is difficult to overestimate the

importance. The sun possesses a certain quantity of heat or of energy, and that energy is being gradually wasted in the depths of space. It would not perhaps be true to say that the sun is at present actually falling in temperature. If the sun be actually gaseous, it may strangely enough be getting hotter instead of colder, so long as it remains gaseous; but, however we look at the question, there is one statement which admits of no doubtful interpretation—as the heat is radiated away, so the particles which form the sun's mass are drawn more and more closely together. The total mass of the sun—its weight as placed in a scale—cannot decrease, but the bulk which the sun occupies must decrease and is at this moment decreasing, and, so far as we know, will continue to decrease until the sun is one hard mass of matter benumbed with the cold of space.

It is true that the process of shrinking is very slow; it is so slow that we cannot measure with our telescopes the decrease in the sun's bulk, but we can calculate what the alteration in the sun's bulk must be in order to supply the daily radiation of heat. The change is but very small when we consider the present size of the sun. At the present moment the sun has a diameter of 860,000 miles. Each year this diameter decreases by about 220 feet; this decrease is always taking place; the process is never reversed; it is not periodic like so many other phenomena of nature; in time the result must become of overwhelming importance. The sun's career as a source of light and heat is ultimately doomed to extinction. It has been calculated that the sun cannot radiate enough heat to maintain life on the earth for a period of 10,000,000 years more.

I must not linger any longer on this subject, which would indeed require not one, but several lectures for adequate treatment. In particular I am obliged to pass by without discussion the remarkable theory lately put forward by Sir C. W. Siemens in the hope of retrieving the sun's reputation as a spendthrift. Coming from an authority of such justly-deserved repute, this theory has naturally attracted a great deal of attention. It is incumbent on me to mention it here, because, if this theory should be ultimately found to be true, the views previously entertained as to the dissipation of the sun's energy would require the most profound modification. I have given this theory the attention which anything coming from an author of such eminence must merit, but it has failed to convince me, and I still remain of the opinion usually held before its publication.

One hundred years ago the diameter of the sun was four miles greater than it is at present. One thousand years ago the diameter of the sun was forty miles greater than it is at present. Ten thousand years ago the diameter of the sun was 400 miles greater than it is now. The advent of man upon the earth took place no doubt a long time ago, but in the history of the earth the advent of man is a comparatively recent phenomenon. Yet it seems certain that when man first trod our planet, the diameter of the sun must have been many hundreds, perhaps many thousands, of miles greater than it is at present. We must not, however, overestimate the significance of this statement. The diameter of the sun is at present 860,000 miles, so that a diminution of 10,000 miles would be little more than the hundredth part of its diameter. If the diameter of the sun were to shrink to-morrow to the extent of 10,000 miles, the change would not be appreciable to common observation, though even a much smaller change would not elude delicate astronomical measurement. The world on which the primitive man trod was certainly illuminated by a larger sun than that which now shines upon us. It does not necessarily follow that the climates must have been much hotter then than now. The question of warmth depends upon other matters as well as sunbeams, so that we must be cautious in any inferences drawn in this way, nor are any such inferences needed for our present purpose.

But we must not stop in our retrospect at the epoch even of primeval man. We must go back earlier and earlier through the long ages of the geologists, and back again still further to the earliest epochs, when life first began to dawn on the earth. Still we find no reason to suppose that the law of the sun's decreasing heat is not still maintained, and thus, as far as our present knowledge goes, we are bound to suppose that the sun must have been larger and larger the further our retrospect extends. I do not say that the rate at which the sun changes its diameter was then the same as the four miles per century which is an approximation to its present rate. It is sufficient for our purpose that the sun is larger and larger the further we peer back into the remote abyss of the past. There was a time when the sun must have been twice as large as it is at present; it must once have been three times as large; it must once have been ten times as large. How long ago that was, no one can venture to say. It would be rash to attempt any estimate; but we cannot stop at the stage when the sun was even ten times as large as it is at present;

the arguments we have used will still apply with equal, if not greater, force. And, looking back earlier still, there was a time when the sun was once swollen to such an extent that the mighty orbit of Neptune itself would be merely a girdle around the stupendous globe. At that time the sun must have been a gaseous mass of almost inconceivable tenuity. We are not to suppose that the earth and the other planets were solid bodies deeply buried in the vast bulk of the sun. It seems evident that the planets were gaseous masses in those ancient days and undistinguishable from the sun, which gave them birth.

We are now able to make an attempt to trace the history of the solar system, and to indicate the share which Darwin has had in the solution of the noble problem. We do not inquire how the original nebula came into being; our history must commence with the actual existence of this nebula. There is, let it be confessed, a great deal of obscurity still clinging to the subject. Though we may be sure that the great nebula once existed, we cannot with much confidence trace out the method by which the planets were actually formed. It seems to be generally thought that the nebula must have been originally endowed with a certain rotation. This may be regarded as certain; indeed, it would be infinitely improbable that the nebula should not have had some rotation. As the nebula began to radiate heat, so it must have begun to contract; and as it began to contract, it began to rotate more rapidly. This is only the consequence of a well-known dynamical principle. But as the nebula spins more and more rapidly, the cohesion of its parts is lessened by centrifugal force. The moment at length arrives when the centrifugal force detaches a fragment of the nebula. The process of condensation still continues both in the fragment and in the central mass; the fragment changes from the gaseous state to the liquid, perhaps even from the liquid to the solid, and thus becomes a planet. Still the central mass condenses, and spins more and more rapidly, until a rupture again takes place and a second planet is produced. Again, and still again, the same process is repeated, until at length we recognise the central mass as our great and glorious sun, diminished by incessant contraction, though still vast and brilliantly hot. One of the lesser fragments which he cast off has consolidated into our earth, while other fragments, greater and smaller, have formed the rest of the host of planets. There are many features in the planets which seem to corroborate this view of their origin. They all revolve around the sun in the same

direction; they all revolve on their own axes in the same direction, that direction being also coincident with the sun's rotation on its axis. Most astronomers are agreed that the history of the solar system has been something of the kind that I have ventured to describe. Astronomers were thus the first evolutionists; they had sketched out a majestic scheme of evolution for the whole solar system, and now they are rejoiced to find that the great Doctrine of Evolution has received an extension to the whole domain of organic life by the splendid genius of Darwin.

At its first separation from the shrinking central nebula, our earth was probably a mass of glowing gas, of incredibly greater volume than it is at present. Gradually the earth parted with its heat by radiation, and commenced to shrink also. The temperature was so high, that iron and other still more refractory substances were actually in a state of vapour, but, as the temperature fell, these substances could not remain in the gaseous form; they condensed first into liquids, these liquids coalesced into a vast central mass, and still that mass went on cooling until its surface, passing through the various stages of incandescence, sank at length to a temperature comparatively cool. Still the earth was swathed with a deep and dense mantle of air, charged with an enormous load of watery vapour; but, as the temperature of the surface gradually decreased, at length the watery vapours were condensed and descended to form the oceans with which our earth is so largely covered. At this point the functions of the astronomer are at an end; he has traced in outline the manufacture of the earth from the primeval nebula; he has accounted for its revolution round the sun, for its rotation on its axis; he has accounted for the shape of the earth and for its internal heat. His work being done, he now hands over the continuance of the history to the biologist.

The lifeless earth is the canvas on which has been drawn the noblest picture which modern science has produced. It is Darwin who has drawn this picture. He has shown that the evolution of the lifeless earth from the nebula is but the prelude to an organic evolution of still greater interest and complexity. He has taken up the history of the earth at the point where the astronomer left it, and he has made discoveries which have influenced thought and opinion more than any other discoveries which have been made for centuries. We here encounter a very celebrated difficulty. The theory of Darwin requires life to begin with, but how did that life originate? I need hardly remind you of

the celebrated controversy which has taken place on this subject. It has been contended that life can never be produced except from life; but just as stoutly has the opposite view been maintained. Can it be possible that the wondrous and complex phenomena known as life are purely material? Can a particle of matter which consists only of a definite number of atoms of definite chemical composition manifest any of those characters which characterise life? Take as an extreme instance the brain of an ant, which is not larger than a quarter of a good-sized pin's head. It would require a volume to describe what we know of the powers of ants. Huber showed this long ago, and Sir John Lubbock has lately reminded us of it, while adding further discoveries of his own. I here quote Darwin's vivid description; but it is only right to add that many different species of ants are referred to, though included under the common designation: 'Ants certainly communicate information to each other, and several unite for the same work, or for games of play. They recognise their fellow-ants after months of absence, and feel sympathy for each other. They build great edifices, keep them clean, close the door in the evening, and post sentries. They make roads as well as tunnels under rivers, and temporary bridges over them by clinging together. They collect food for the community, and when an object too large for entrance is brought to the nest, they enlarge the door, and afterwards build it up again. They store up seeds of which they prevent the germination, and which if damp are brought to the surface to dry. They keep aphides and other insects as milch cows. They go out to battle in regular bands, and freely sacrifice their lives for the common weal. They emigrate according to a peculiar plan. They capture slaves. They move the eggs of their aphides, as well as their own eggs and cocoons, into warm parts of the nest, in order that they may be quickly hatched.'¹

Well may Darwin speak of the brain of an ant as one of the most wondrous particles of matter in the world. We are apt to think that it is impossible for so minute a piece of matter to possess the necessary complexity required for the discharge of such elaborate functions. The microscope will no doubt show some details in the ant's brain, but these fall hopelessly short of revealing the refinement which the ant's brain must really have. The microscope is not adequate to show us the texture of matter. It has been one of the great discoveries of modern times to enable us to form some numerical estimate of the exquisite delicacy of

¹ Darwin, *Descent of Man*, p. 147.

the fabric which we know as inert matter. Water, or air, or iron may be divided and subdivided, but the process cannot be carried on indefinitely. There is a well-defined limit. We are even able to make some approximation to the number of molecules in a given mass of matter. Sir W. Thomson has estimated that the number of atoms in a cubic inch of air is to be expressed by the number 3, followed by no fewer than twenty ciphers. The brain of the ant doubtless contains more atoms than an equal volume of air; but even if we suppose them to be the same, and if we take the size of an ant's brain to be a little globe one-thousandth of an inch in diameter, we are able to form some estimate of the number of atoms it must contain. The number is to be expressed by writing down 6, and following it by eleven ciphers. We can imagine these atoms grouped in so many various ways that even the complexity of the ant's brain may be intelligible when we have so many units to deal with. An illustration will perhaps make the argument clearer. Take a million and a half of little black marks, put them in a certain order, and we have a wondrous result—Darwin's '*Descent of Man*.' This book merely consists of about a million and a half letters, placed one after the other in a certain order. Whatever be the complexity of the ant's brain, it is still hard to believe that it could not be fully described in 400,000 volumes, each as large as Darwin's work. Yet the number of molecules in the ant's brain is at least 400,000 times as great as the number of letters in the memorable volume in question.

It would seem that by merely studying the behaviour of an infusion of hay or a tincture of turnips in a test tube, we do not rise to the full magnificence of the problem as to whether life can have originated on the globe from the particles of inorganic matter.

Unusual, indeed, must be the circumstances which will have brought about such a combination of atoms as to form the first organic being. But great events are always unusual. Because we cannot repeatedly make an organised being from inert matter in our test tubes, are we to say that such an event can never once have occurred with the infinite opportunities of nature? We have in nature the most varied conditions of temperature, of pressure, and of chemical composition. Every corner of the earth and of the ocean has been the laboratory in which these experiments have been carried on. It is not necessary to suppose that such an event as the formation of an organised being shall have occurred often. If in the whole course of millions of years past it has once happened, either on the

land or in the depths of the ocean, that a group of atoms, few or many, have been so segregated as to have the power of assimilating outside material, and the power of producing other groups more or less similar to themselves, then we have no more demands to make on the 'Theory of Spontaneous Generation.' The more we study the actual nature of matter the less improbable will it seem that organic beings should have so originated. One of the most obvious contrasts between organic and inorganic bodies seems to be the power of motion often inherent in the organised body, which is not possessed by the inorganic body; but this is really a superficial view of the question. Take any mass of inorganic matter, a drop of water or a grain of sand. Each of these bodies is composed of a certain number of ultimate atoms. We have no hope that we shall ever have a microscope sufficiently powerful to detect these atoms; but we nevertheless know that they exist, and we know several of their properties. We know, for instance, that even in solid bodies these particles are not at rest, that they are in rapid and ceaseless motion, even though the body may be as rigid as a diamond. In ultimate analysis we see that the atoms of inorganic matter seem to have that mobility which is frequently noticed as a characteristic of vital action. A mere rearrangement of the movements of the atoms of a grain of sand could confer on the grain of sand some of the attributes of an organised body.

The method Darwin adopted is of the most captivating simplicity. It is doubtless well known to many here, and I shall glance at it but very briefly. When the history of Science in our century comes to be written, the interest will culminate in the supreme discovery of Natural Selection.

There are so many modifying circumstances to be taken into account that it is not often easy to trace the actual course of natural selection; but the leading idea is so simple that, once it is properly stated, I do not see how any reasonable person can refuse his assent. There is a well-known proverb, 'as like as two peas,' and at a superficial glance two peas are no doubt very like each other. They are like in their size, shape, and colour; they are like in their internal structure; but, when we look closely into the subject, no two peas are exactly alike. Take any two peas from a sack, and after a brief examination you will detect innumerable points of difference. Weighed in a careful balance, they have not the same actual weight; gauged with a pair of callipers, they have not the same size; and these differences extend to every minute part of the structure. One pea will have more nourish-

ment stored up for the benefit of the future plant. Another will be better able to resist hurtful influences. That two peas should be so absolutely identical in every feature as to be indistinguishable is an impossibility, or, as a mathematician would say, the chances are infinitely against such an occurrence; and when the chances are such we may for all practical purposes consider them as non-existent. If we find that two peas are never really alike, neither shall we find that two organisms of any kind are really alike when attention is directed to minute points of distinction. A shepherd will laugh to scorn the idea that any two of his flock are so like that they could be mistaken. Even his dog knows better than that. A poultry fancier will see in his pets conspicuous marks of difference which are barely apparent to the unskilled eye. I need not multiply illustrations, which will occur to everybody; the innumerable variety of roses and of geraniums, of apples and of other fruits, will show how universal is the law of variety among all the productions of the organic world.

The great doctrine of natural selection is founded upon this susceptibility to variation. Suppose that you wished to improve the peas in your garden, it is quite possible to do so in a few years in the following manner: Take 100 peas, sow them and preserve the seed. You will have some thousands of seeds, but no two peas will be exactly alike; pick out the hundred heaviest seeds and sow them again next season. You will have a crop of thousands, from which you are again to pick out the heaviest hundred. As this process is repeated year by year you will find that within certain limits the peas are gradually increased in size from one generation to another, and thus it is that improved varieties can be artificially established. The success of this process depends merely upon taking judicious advantage of the variability inherent in the organic world. This we may call an artificial selection as opposed to the natural selection.

What we have here described as being produced artificially in the pea is going on everywhere on the grandest scale in nature. Take an illustration this time from animal life; and I choose, as one of the most widely known instances, some incidents in the history of the common herring, which exists in such countless myriads in our oceans. Those who frequent the sea are well acquainted with certain features in the life of the herring. The herring is a fish deservedly prized for food, but it is not only mankind that are fond of devouring the herring; a similar taste is widely spread among the fowls of the air and the fishes of the sea.

The herring has no defence from innumerable enemies but his agility and his caution. Around the shoal swarm troops of porpoises, while pollock and various other predatory fish follow the shoal wherever they go and devour the herrings in countless myriads. The female herring lays a stupendous quantity of eggs. It is perfectly certain that only a very minute fraction of these eggs ever reach maturity. If only one per cent. of the eggs grew to full size and reproduced more herrings, the herring population of the sea must increase manifold every year. This cannot always, or indeed often, be the case, and we are thus compelled to believe that out of every million herring eggs only a small fraction usually come to maturity. To those who have ever observed the herring this appalling mortality will not seem strange. To begin with, when the herring eggs are laid the flat fishes congregate and feast on the eggs to such an extent that fishermen repair to these spots and catch the flat fish in scores with their stomachs filled with the eggs of the herring. No doubt there are many other enemies at this stage, so that vast multitudes of the herring eggs never become hatched at all; even those that are hatched have indeed an anxious time of it. Around our coast we see in the autumn shoals of the tiny herrings pursued and devoured by hosts of young codfish and mackerel. Sometimes the fish surround the shoal completely, and the miserable prey cluster together near the top of the water in a vain hope of safety; but, alas! here the enemies from the air attack them. Sea-gulls crowd to the spot, gannets swallow the young herrings in mouthfuls, the rolling of porpoises adds more life to the scene, and once a shoal has been thus imprisoned between air and water, the slaughter is truly prodigious. The voracity of enemies is not the only danger to which young herrings are exposed; often they are left on the beach by the falling tide, and may be seen lying in hundreds along the sea margin. I purposely leave out of account all mere human enemies. The efforts of man in catching herrings are quite insignificant in comparison with their more numerous and incessantly voracious destroyers. Indeed Professor Huxley states that the codfish caught in our seas each season would, if they had not been caught, have eaten as many herrings during the next season as those which have actually fallen to the nets of the fisherman. The survivors of this fearful massacre are naturally objects of very great interest. How is it that they have been spared when so many myriads of their brothers and sisters have been annihilated. No doubt their safety is partly due to the chapter of accidents. They happen to be

out of the way when the mackerel made a fatal rush. The sea-gull had eaten so many that when it came to their turn he positively could not eat any more. They got into the middle of the shoal afterwards and escaped the fish that preyed on its margin. But, making every allowance for the benefit of the accidents, I think we must credit the surviving herrings themselves with some share in their success. The few that have survived were certainly not the most stupid. They must have had quick sight, they must have had nimble fins, they must have had vigilance and activity. They must have been skilful in procuring food as well as alert in avoiding danger. They had no maternal solicitude to watch over them. Every little herring had to forage for himself, and to hide from or elude his enemies as well as he could; he had no kind warning that the tide was falling and that he would be left high and dry if he did not keep away from the edge. I think we must admit that the few herrings that survive out of a million eggs are above the average in whatever qualities constitute excellence in a herring. I will not say that they must be actually the very best, but I think we must admit that they were among the best.

What we have here attempted to illustrate takes place in the whole realm of organised life. The organic beings, animal and vegetable, tend to increase faster than the food or the presence of enemies will permit. Many must therefore perish. No two of these organisms are exactly identical. There will be trifling differences (sometimes, indeed, the differences are by no means trifling). It thus happens that in the struggle for life one individual will have a slight advantage over another. It therefore may be anticipated that the more favoured individuals will be those which survive; their peculiarities will be more or less inherited by their descendants. Thus the variations which are useful to the animal will in successive generations be gradually added to, and in course of time the widest changes in organisation can thus arise.

It may at first seem hard to realise that so trifling a change as that between one generation and the next can ever by repetition amount up to so great a change as that between one species of animal and another; still less can we imagine at first how animals so widely distinct as, for instance, a bird and a fish, can have originated by natural selection from some common ancestor. The whole question is chiefly one of time, complicated, it must be admitted, by many details; but it is easy to show how minute differences between one generation and the next, all tending in

one direction, speedily reach to an appreciable amount. Let me give an illustration. I know some tender mothers who like to have their darlings photographed every year in order to preserve a permanent record of their development. No doubt the mother would have no difficulty in distinguishing between the photographs of her child at two years old or at three, or even between those of her boy at thirteen and at fourteen. But suppose that, instead of having the child photographed only once a year, he were to be photographed every week from birth until he was full grown. This is not at all an impracticable suggestion; there would be little more than a thousand photographs altogether. An album could easily be made which would hold them all. Of course the prudent mother would mark the dates on the back; but suppose this was not done, and the whole thousand photographs got into confusion, would it be possible to arrange them all in order again? Certainly no outsider could do it; he could sort them in a general way, so as to have the babies at one end, and the young men at the other, and the boys in the middle. But could he put the whole thousand in regular order from one end to the other? He could not. I doubt very much whether even the mother herself could do it without numerous faults. Now, if this be granted, the great difficulty in believing natural selection to be the origin of species will be lessened. Great as is the difference between a newborn infant and a man of twenty, the one passes into the other by such imperceptible gradations that the boy of this Monday is hardly distinguishable from the boy of last Monday or of next Monday. We thus see that if we divide the growth of an individual man into one thousand stages the passage from one stage to the next is almost imperceptible. In the same way, if we subdivide the growth of a species into a thousand parts or a million parts, we shall have gradations quite comparable with those we meet with in the ordinary variation from one generation to the next.

Nor is it hard to see how the process of natural selection has gradually produced diverging branches from the parent stem. The variations which occur may be of use to the organism in various ways. Among the progeny of a single pair there may be two individuals, A and B, which are specially favoured; but they may be favoured in different ways. A may have some increased facility in catching his prey; B, by his peculiar colour, of greater activity, may have superior power of eluding his enemies. The descendants of A will gradually from one gene-

ration to the next strengthen and reinforce the special feature which characterised A. The descendants of B will grow more and more adapted for eluding their enemies. The influence of natural selection is in both cases promoting the survival of the fittest, but each generation will see the cousins more and more widely separated. In no case indeed would the process be so simple as that here described—a multitude of circumstances will occur to complicate it; but enough has been said to show that in the great principle of natural selection we have a means of producing animals and plants which in the course of time will differ widely from other organisms from the same progenitors.

No one has ever seen a new species developed by natural selection; but this is because no one has ever lived long enough for that purpose. The circumstantial evidence in favour of natural selection is indeed so strong that no unprejudiced person can refuse to accept it. That evidence has of late years been poured out with a profusion which could hardly have been anticipated at the time when the '*Origin of Species*' was published. Entombed within solid rocks we find fossil remains of the former inhabitants of our earth. There lies in these rocks a record of vast extent and of the most supreme interest, but that record is to a great extent screened from our view. Here and there fossils have been brought to light; but the greater part of the earth has never been examined, and we have as yet only the veriest fragments of the geological record before us. But these fragments of the record are of the most intense importance; they show us several of the links which connect one class of animals with another in the way the Darwinian theory suggests; and they encourage us to hope that, when the geological record shall have been fully explored, we shall have glimpses of a majestic panorama of the salient points in the history of life on our globe.

Mathematicians are long accustomed to the use of what is known as the infinitesimal calculus. It is indeed chiefly the infinitesimal calculus which has raised the science of mathematics to its present position, and which has given to that science a potent grasp over some of the inmost recesses of nature. Suppose, for instance, to take one of the most profound problems, we proceed to investigate on mathematical principles the movement of one of the planets. The sun, in the first place, attracts the planet, and in virtue of that attraction the planet would move in a certain path which could be determined with comparative ease. But the actual problem is by no means so simple. The planet is acted on by

other planets; its orbit is thus deflected slightly from the simple form it would otherwise have; and while the orbit preserves a general resemblance to the ellipse, it is in reality a path of the utmost complexity. But still the mathematician can follow the planet; he can point out with accuracy where the planet was at any ancient date; he can show where it will be at any future date. It is the infinitesimal calculus, the invention of Newton and Leibnitz, which enables this to be done. By this most subtle and exquisite contrivance we attack the problem in detail. It is comparatively easy to find out the direction in which the planet is moving at any instant, as well as its velocity. This will enable us to ascertain where it will be in the next moment of time. We are then in the same condition as before, and we can repeat the operation and carry on this process as long as we like, and thus discover where the planet will be at any future date. The success of the process consists in attacking the question in detail. Is there not in this a striking analogy to the great principle of Darwin? In each case great effects are produced by the constant addition of innumerable small tendencies, all in the same direction. As the infinitesimal calculus of Newton has led us to a wonderful knowledge of the physical laws which regulate the universe, so the infinitesimal calculus of Darwin has afforded the solution of the profound problem presented by organic life.

It must have been with a glimpse of prophetic insight that Cuvier exclaimed, 'Shall not natural history some day have its Newton?' At the very time these words were uttered the Newton of natural history had been born, and his immortal work has just been closed.

ROBERT S. BALL.

Vox Clamantis.

WHAT secret saddens through the wind to-night,
Dying on every weary drift of rain,
And wrestling into utterance again
Among the aspens touched with elfin light,
Or blown to sudden silver by the flight
Of gusts that grieve and wander by? What pain
Compels these homeless voices to complain
Across the darkness over wold and height?
Surely some dumb thing yearns within the sound,
Its monotone some baffled message fills:
Hark! Now it hushes down among the hills,
Now sweeps lamenting towards the lower ground,
Where, on the marish-pools that shine around,
The climbing moon her phantom lustre spills.

W. A. SIM.

The Foundering of the 'Fortuna.'

I.

I AM going to spin you the yarn of the foundering of the 'Fortuna' exactly as an old lake captain on a Huron steamer once span it for me by Great Manitoulin Island. It is a strange and a weird story; and if I can't give you the dialect in which he told it, you must forgive an English tongue its native accent for the sake of the curious Yankee tale that underlies it.

Captain Montague Beresford Pierpoint was hardly the sort of man you would have expected to find behind the counter of a small shanty bank at Aylmer's Pike, Colorado. There was an engaging English frankness, an obvious honesty and refinement of manner about him, which suited very oddly with the rough habits and rougher western speech of the mining population in whose midst he lived. And yet, Captain Pierpoint had succeeded in gaining the confidence and respect of those strange outcasts of civilisation by some indescribable charm of address and some invisible talisman of quiet good-fellowship, which caused him to be more universally believed in than any other man whatsoever at Aylmer's Pike. Indeed, to say so much is rather to underrate the uniqueness of his position; for it might, perhaps, be truer to say that Captain Pierpoint was the only man in the place in whom anyone believed at all in any way. He was an honest-spoken, quiet, unobtrusive sort of man, who walked about fearlessly without a revolver, and never gambled either in mining shares or at poker; so that, to the simple-minded, unsophisticated rogues and vagabonds of Aylmer's Pike, he seemed the very incarnation of incorruptible commercial honour. They would have trusted all their earnings and winnings without hesitation to Captain Pierpoint's bare word; and when they did so, they knew that Captain Pierpoint always had the money forthcoming, on demand, without a moment's delay or a single prevarication.

Captain Pierpoint walked very straight and erect, as becomes a man of conspicuous uprightness; and there was a certain tinge of military bearing in his manner which seemed at first sight sufficiently to justify his popular title. But he himself made no

false pretences upon that head; he freely acknowledged that he had acquired the position of captain, not in her Britannic Majesty's Guards, as the gossip of Aylmer's Pike sometimes asserted, but in the course of his earlier professional engagements as skipper of a Lake Superior grain-vessel. Though he hinted at times that he was by no means distantly connected with the three distinguished families whose names he bore, he did not attempt to exalt his rank or birth unduly, admitting that he was only a Canadian sailor by trade, thrown by a series of singular circumstances into the position of a Colorado banker. The one thing he really understood, he would tell his mining friends, was the grain-trade on the upper lakes; for finance he had but a single recommendation, and that was that if people trusted him he could never deceive them.

If any man had set up a bank at Aylmer's Pike with an iron strong-room, a lot of electric bells, and an obtrusive display of fire-arms and weapons, it is tolerably certain that that bank would have been promptly robbed and gutted within its first week of existence by open violence. Five or six of the boys would have banded themselves together into a body of housebreakers, and would have shot down the banker and burst into his strong-room, without thought of the electric bells or other feeble resources of civilisation to that end appointed. But when a quiet, unobtrusive, brave man, like Captain Montague Pierpoint, settled himself in a shanty in their midst, and won their confidence by his straightforward honesty, scarcely a miner in the lot would ever have dreamt of attempting to rob him. Captain Pierpoint had not come to Aylmer's Pike at first with any settled idea of making himself the financier of the rough little community; he intended to dig on his own account, and the rôle of banker was only slowly thrust upon him by the unanimous voice of the whole diggings. He had begun by lending men money out of his own pocket—men who were unlucky in their claims, men who had lost everything at monte, men who had come penniless to the Pike, and expected to find silver growing freely and openly on the surface. He had lent to them in a friendly way, without interest, and had been forced to accept a small present, in addition to the sum advanced, when the tide began to turn, and luck at last led the penniless ones to a remunerative placer or pocket. Gradually the diggers got into the habit of regarding this as Captain Pierpoint's natural function, and Captain Pierpoint, being himself but an indifferent digger, acquiesced so readily that at last, yielding to

the persuasion of his clients, he put up a wooden counter, and painted over his rough door the magnificent notice, 'Aylmer's Pike Bank: Montague Pierpoint, Manager.' He got a large iron safe from Carson City, and in that safe, which stood by his own bedside, all the silver and other securities of the whole village were duly deposited. 'Any one of the boys could easily shoot me and open that safe any night,' Captain Pierpoint used to say pleasantly; 'but if he did, by George! he'd have to reckon afterwards with every man on the Pike; and I should be sorry to stand in his shoes—that I would, any time.' Indeed, the entire Pike looked upon Captain Pierpoint's safe as 'Our Bank;' and, united in a single front by that simple social contract, they agreed to respect the safe as a sacred object, protected by the collective guarantee of three hundred mutually suspicious revolver-bearing outcasts.

However, even at Aylmer's Pike, there were degrees and stages of comparative unscrupulousness. Two men, new-comers to the Pike, by name Hiram Coffin and Pete Morris, at last wickedly and feloniously conspired together to rob Captain Pierpoint's bank. Their plan was simplicity itself. They would go at midnight, very quietly, to the Captain's house, cut his throat as he slept, rob the precious safe, and ride off straight for the east, thus getting a clear night's start of any possible pursuer. It was an easy enough thing to do; and they were really surprised in their own minds that nobody else had ever been cute enough to seize upon such an obvious and excellent path to wealth and security.

The day before the night the two burglars had fixed upon for their enterprise, Captain Pierpoint himself appeared to be in unusual spirits. Pete Morris called in at the bank during the course of the morning, to reconnoitre the premises, under pretence of paying in a few dollars' worth of silver, and he found the Captain very lively indeed. When Pete handed him the silver across the counter, the Captain weighed it with a smile, gave a receipt for the amount—he always gave receipts as a matter of form—and actually invited Pete into the little back room, which was at once kitchen, bedroom, and parlour, to have a drink. Then, before Pete's very eyes, he opened the safe, bursting with papers, and placed the silver in a bag on a shelf by itself, sticking the key into his waistcoat pocket. 'He is delivering himself up into our hands,' thought Pete to himself, as the Captain poured out two glasses of old Bourbon, and handed one to the miner opposite.

'Here's success to all our enterprises!' cried the Captain gaily. 'Here's success, pard!' Pete answered, with a sinister look, which even the Captain could not help noting in a sidelong fashion.

That night, about two o'clock, when all Aylmer's Pike was quietly dreaming its own sordid, drunken dreams, two sober men rose up from their cabin and stole out softly to the wooden bank house. Two horses were ready saddled with Mexican saddle-bags, and tied to a tree outside the digging, and in half an hour Pete and Hiram hoped to find themselves in full possession of all Captain Pierpoint's securities, and well on their road towards the nearest station of the Pacific Railway. They groped along to the door of the bank shanty, and began fumbling with their wire picks at the rough lock. After a moment's exploration of the wards, Pete Morris drew back in surprise.

'Pard,' he murmured in a low whisper, 'here's suthin' rather extraordinary; this 'ere lock's not fastened.'

They turned the handle gently, and found that the door opened without an effort. Both men looked at one another in the dim light incredulously. Was there ever such a simple, trustful fool as that fellow Pierpoint! He actually slept in the bank shanty with his outer door unfastened!

The two robbers passed through the outer room and into the little back bedroom-parlour. Hiram held the dark lantern, and turned it full on to the bed. To their immense astonishment they found it empty.

Their first impulse was to suppose that the Captain had somehow anticipated their coming, and had gone out to rouse the boys. For a moment they almost contemplated running away, without the money. But a second glance reassured them; the bed had not been slept in. The Captain was a man of very regular habits. He made his bed in civilised fashion every morning after breakfast, and he retired every evening at a little after eleven. Where he could be stopping so late they couldn't imagine. But they hadn't come there to make a study of the Captain's personal habits, and, as he was away, the best thing they could do was to open the safe immediately, before he came back. They weren't particular about murder, Pete and Hiram; still, if you *could* do your robbery without bloodshed, it was certainly all the better to do it so.

Hiram held the lantern, carefully shaded by his hand, towards the door of the safe. Pete looked cautiously at the lock, and began pushing it about with his wire pick; he had hoped to get

the key out of Captain Pierpoint's pocket, but as that easy scheme was so unexpectedly foiled, he trusted to his skill in picking to force the lock open. Once more a fresh surprise awaited him. The door opened almost of its own accord! Pete looked at Hiram, and Hiram looked at Pete. There was no mistaking the strange fact that met their gaze—the safe was empty!

'What on airth do you suppose is the meaning of this, Pete?' Hiram whispered hoarsely. But Pete did not whisper; the whole truth flashed upon him in a moment, and he answered aloud, with a string of oaths, 'The Cap'n has gone and made tracks hisself for Madison Depôt. And he's taken every red cent in the safe along with him, too! the mean, low, dirty scoundrel! He's taken even my silver that he give me a receipt for this very morning!'

Hiram stared at Pete in blank amazement. That such base treachery could exist on earth almost surpassed his powers of comprehension; he could understand that a man should rob and murder, simply and naturally, as he was prepared to do, out of pure, guileless depravity of heart, but that a man should plan and plot for a couple of years to impose upon the simplicity of a dishonest community by a consistent show of respectability, with the ultimate object of stealing its whole wealth at one fell swoop, was scarcely within the limits of his narrow intelligence. He stared blankly at the empty safe, and whispered once more to Pete in a timid undertone, 'Perhaps he's got wind of this, and took off the plate to somebody else's hut. If the boys was to come and catch us here, it 'ud be derved awkward for you an' me, Pete.' But Pete answered gruffly and loudly, 'Never you mind about the plate, pard. The Cap'n's gone, and the plate's gone with him; and what we've got to do now is to rouse the boys and ride after him like greased lightnin'. The mean swindler, to go and swindle me out of the silver that I've been and dug out of that there claim yonder with my own pick!' For the sense of personal injustice to oneself rises perennially in the human breast, however depraved, and the man who would murder another without a scruple is always genuinely aghast with just indignation when he finds the counsel for the prosecution pressing a point against him with what seems to him unfair persistency.

Pete flung his lock-pick out among the agave scrub that faced the bank shanty and ran out wildly into the midst of the dusty white road that led down the row of huts which the people of Aylmer's Pike euphemistically described as the Main Street. There he raised such an unearthly whoop as roused the sleepers in the

nearest huts to turn over in their beds and listen in wonder, with a vague idea that 'the Injuns' were coming down on a scalping-trail upon the diggings. Next, he hurried down the street, beating heavily with his fist on every frame door, and kicking hard at the log walls of the successive shanties. In a few minutes the whole Pike was out and alive. Unwholesome-looking men, in unwashed flannel shirts and loose trousers, mostly barefooted in their haste, came forth to inquire, with an unnecessary wealth of expletives, what the something was stirring. Pete, breathless and wrathful in the midst, livid with rage and disappointment, could only shriek aloud, 'Cap'n Pierpoint has cleared out of camp, and taken all the plate with him!' There was at first an incredulous shouting and crying; then a general stampede towards the bank shanty; and, finally, as the truth became apparent to everybody, a deep and angry howl for vengeance on the traitor. In one moment Captain Pierpoint's smooth-faced villany dawned as clear as day to all Aylmer's Pike; and the whole chorus of gamblers, rascals, and blacklegs stood awe-struck with horror and indignation at the more plausible rogue who had succeeded in swindling even them. The clean-washed, white-shirted, fair-spoken villain! they would have his blood for this, if the United States Marshal had every mother's son of them strung up in a row for it after the pesky business was once fairly over.

Nobody inquired how Pete and Hiram came by the news. Nobody asked how they had happened to notice that the shanty was empty and the safe rifled. All they thought of was how to catch and punish the public robber. He must have made for the nearest depôt, Madison Clearing, on the Union Pacific Line, and he would take the first cars east for St. Louis—that was certain. Every horse in the Pike was promptly requisitioned by the fastest riders, and a rough cavalcade, revolvers in hand, made down the gulch and across the plain, full tilt to Madison. But when, in the garish blaze of early morning, they reached the white wooden depôt in the valley and asked the ticket-clerk whether a man answering to their description had gone on by the east mail at 4.30, the ticket-clerk swore, in reply, that not a soul had left the depôt by any train either way that blessed night. Pete Morris proposed to hold a revolver to his head and force him to confess. But even that strong measure failed to induce a satisfactory retraction. By way of general precaution, two of the boys went on by the day train to St. Louis, but neither of them could hear anything of Captain Pierpoint. Indeed, as a matter of fact, the late manager

and present appropriator of the Aylmer's Pike Bank had simply turned his horse's head in the opposite direction, towards the further station at Cheyenne Gap, and had gone westward to San Francisco, intending to make his way back to New York *viâ* Panama and the Isthmus Railway.

When the boys really understood that they had been completely duped, they swore vengeance in solemn fashion, and they picked out two of themselves to carry out the oath in a regular assembly. Each contributed of his substance what he was able; and Pete and Hiram, being more stirred with righteous wrath than all the rest put together, were unanimously deputed to follow the Captain's tracks to San Francisco, and to have his life wherever and whenever they might chance to find him. Pete and Hiram accepted the task thrust upon them, *con amore*, and went forth zealously to hunt up the doomed life of Captain Montague Beresford Pierpoint.

II.

SOCIETY in Sarnia admitted that Captain Pierpoint was really quite an acquisition. An English gentleman by birth, well educated, and of pleasant manners, he had made a little money out west by mining, it was understood, and had now retired to the City of Sarnia, in the Province of Ontario and Dominion of Canada, to increase it by a quiet bit of speculative grain trading. He had been in the grain trade already, and people on the lake remembered him well; for Captain Pierpoint, in his honest, straightforward fashion, disdained the vulgar trickiness of an alias, and bore throughout the string of names which he had originally received from his godfathers and godmothers at his baptism. A thorough good fellow Captain Pierpoint had been at Aylmer's Pike; a perfect gentleman he was at Sarnia. As a matter of fact, indeed, the Captain was decently well-born, the son of an English country clergyman, educated at a respectable grammar school, and capable of being all things to all men in whatever station of life it might please Providence to place him. Society at Sarnia had no prejudice against the grain trade; if it had, the prejudice would have been distinctly self-regarding, for everybody in the little town did something in grain; and if Captain Pierpoint chose sometimes to navigate his own vessels, that was a fad which struck nobody as out of the way in an easy-going, money-getting, Canadian city.

Somehow or other, everything seemed to go wrong with Captain Pierpoint's cargoes. He was always losing a scow laden

with best fall wheat from Chicago for Buffalo; or running a lumber vessel ashore on the shoals of Lake Erie; or getting a four-master jammed in the ice packs on the St. Clair river: and though the insurance companies continually declared that Captain Pierpoint had got the better of them, the Captain himself was wont to complain that no insurance could ever possibly cover the losses he sustained by the carelessness of his subordinates or the constant perversity of wind and waters. He was obliged to take his own ships down, he would have it, because nobody else could take them safely for him; and though he met with quite as many accidents himself as many of his deputies did, he continued to convey his grain in person, hoping, as he said, that luck would turn some day, and that a good speculation would finally enable him honourably to retrieve his shattered fortunes.

However this might be, it happened curiously enough that, in spite of all his losses, Captain Pierpoint seemed to grow richer and richer, visibly to the naked eye, with each reverse of his trading efforts. He took a handsome house, set up a carriage and pair, and made love to the prettiest and sweetest girl in all Sarnia. The prettiest and sweetest girl was not proof against Captain Pierpoint's suave tongue and handsome house; and she married him in very good faith, honestly believing in him, as a good woman will in a scoundrel, and clinging to him fervently with all her heart and soul. No happier and more loving pair in all Sarnia than Captain and Mrs. Pierpoint.

Some months after the marriage, Captain Pierpoint arranged to take down a scow or flat-bottomed boat, laden with grain, from Milwaukee for the Erie Canal. He took up the scow himself, and before he started for the voyage, it was a curious fact that he went in person down into the hold, bored eight large holes right through the bottom, and filled each up, as he drew out the auger, with a caulked plug made exactly to fit it, and hammered firmly into place with a wooden mallet. There was a ring in each plug, by which it could be pulled out again without much difficulty; and the whole eight were all placed along the gangway of the hold, where no cargo would lie on top of them. The scow's name was the 'Fortuna': 'sit faustum omen et felix,' murmured Captain Pierpoint to himself; for among his other accomplishments he had not wholly neglected nor entirely forgotten the classical languages.

It took only two men and the skipper to navigate the scow; for lake craft towed by steam propellers are always very lightly

manned: and when Captain Pierpoint reached Milwaukee, where he was to take in cargo, he dismissed the two sailors who had come with him from Sarnia, and engaged two fresh hands at the harbour. Rough, miner-looking men they were, with very little of the sailor about them; but Captain Pierpoint's sharp eye soon told him they were the right sort of men for his purpose, and he engaged them on the spot, without a moment's hesitation. Pete and Hiram had had some difficulty in tracking him, for they never thought he would return to the lakes, but they had tracked him at last, and were ready now to take their revenge.

They had disguised themselves as well as they were able, and in their clumsy knavery they thought they had completely deceived the Captain. But almost from the moment the Captain saw them, he knew who they were, and he took his measures accordingly. 'Stupid louts,' he said to himself, with the fine contempt of an educated scoundrel for the unsophisticated natural ruffian: 'here's a fine chance of killing two birds with one stone!' And when the Captain said the word 'killing,' he said it in his own mind with a delicate sinister emphasis which meant business.

The scow was duly loaded, and with a heavy cargo of grain aboard, she proceeded to make her way slowly, by the aid of a tug, out of Milwaukee Harbour.

As soon as she was once clear of the wharf, and while the busy shipping of the great port still surrounded them on every side, Captain Pierpoint calmly drew his revolver, and took his stand beside the hatches. 'Pete and Hiram,' he said quietly to his two assistants, 'I want to have a little serious talk with you two before we go any further.'

If he had fired upon them outright instead of merely calling them by their own names, the two common conspirators could not have started more unfeignedly, or looked more unspeakably cowed, than they did at that moment. Their first impulse was to draw their own revolvers in return; but they saw in a second that the Captain was beforehand with them, and that they had better not try to shoot him before the very eyes of all Milwaukee.

'Now, boys,' the Captain went on steadily, with his finger on the trigger and his eye fixed straight on the men's faces, 'we three quite understand one another. I took your savings for reasons of my own; and you have shipped here to-day to murder me on the voyage. But I recognised you before I engaged you: and I have left word at Milwaukee that if anything happens to

me on this journey, you two have a grudge against me, and must be hanged for it. I've taken care that if this scow comes into any port along the lakes without me aboard, you two are to be promptly arrested.' (This was false, of course; but to Captain Pierpoint a small matter like that was a mere trifle.) 'And I've shipped myself along with you, just to show you I'm not afraid of you. But if either of you disobeys my orders in anything for one minute, I shoot at once, and no jury in Canada or the States will touch a hair of my head for doing it. I'm a respectable ship-owner and grain merchant, you're a pair of disreputable skulking miners, pretending to be sailors, and you've shipped aboard here on purpose to murder and rob me. If *you* shoot *me*, it's murder: if *I* shoot *you*, it's justifiable homicide. Now, boys, do you understand that?'

Pete looked at Hiram and was beginning to speak, when the Captain interrupted him in the calm tone of one having authority. 'Look here, Pete,' he said, drawing a chalk line amidships across the deck: 'you stand this side of that line, and you stand there, Hiram. Now, mind, if either of you chooses to step across that line or to confer with the other, I shoot you, whether it's here before all the eyes of Milwaukee, or alone in the middle of Huron. You must each take your own counsel, and do as you like for yourselves. But I've got a little plan of my own on, and if you choose willingly to help me in it, your fortune's made. Look at the thing squarely, boys, what's the use of your killing me? Sooner or later you'll get hung for it, and it's a very unpleasant thing, I can assure you, hanging.' As the Captain spoke, he placed his unoccupied hand loosely on his throat, and pressed it gently backward. Pete and Hiram shuddered a little as he did so. 'Well, what's the good of ending your lives that way, eh? But I'm doing a little speculative business on these lakes, where I want just such a couple of men as you two—men that'll do as they're told in a matter of business, and ask no squeamish questions. If you care to help me in this business, you can stop and make your fortunes; if you don't, you can go back to Milwaukee with the tug.'

'You speak fair enough,' said Pete, dubitatively; 'but you know, Cap'n, you ain't a man to be trusted. I owe you one already for stealing my silver.'

'Very little silver,' the Captain answered, with a wave of the hand and a graceful smile. 'Bonds, United States bonds and greenbacks most of it, converted beforehand for easier conveyance

by horseback. These, however, are business details which needn't stand in the way between you and me, partner. I always was straightforward in all my dealings, and I'll come to the point at once, so that you can know whether you'll help me or not. This scow's plugged at bottom. My intention is, first, to part the rope that ties us to the tug; next, to transfer the cargo by night to a small shanty I've got on Manitoulin Island; and then to pull the plugs and sink the scow on Manitoulin rocks. That way I get insurance for the cargo and scow, and carry on the grain in the slack season. If you consent to help me unload, and sink the ship, you shall have half profits between you; if you don't, you can go back to Milwaukee like a couple of fools, and I'll put into port again to get a couple of pluckier fellows. Answer each for yourselves. Hiram, will you go with me?'

'How shall I know you'll keep your promise?' asked Hiram.

'For the best of all possible reasons,' replied the Captain, jauntily; 'because, if I don't, you can inform upon me to the insurance people.'

In Hiram Coffin's sordid soul there was a moment's turning over of the chances; and then greed prevailed over revenge, and he said, grudgingly—

'Well, Cap'n, I'll go with you.'

The Captain smiled the smile of calm self-approbation, and turned half round to Pete.

'And you?' he asked.

'If Hiram goes, I go too,' Pete answered, half hoping that some chance might occur for conferring with his neighbour on the road, and following out their original conspiracy. But Captain Pierpoint had been too much for him: he had followed the excellent rule 'divide et impera,' and he remained clearly master of the situation.

As soon as they were well outside Milwaukee Harbour, the tug dragged them into the open lake, all unconscious of the strange scene that had passed on the deck so close to it; and the oddly mated crew made its way, practically alone, down the busy waters of Lake Michigan.

Captain Pierpoint certainly didn't spend a comfortable time during his voyage down the lake, or through the Straits of Mackinaw. To say the truth, he could hardly sleep at all, and he was very fagged and weary when they arrived at Manitoulin Island. But Pete and Hiram, though they had many chances of talking together, could not see their way to kill him in safety;

and Hiram at least, in his own mind, had come to the conclusion that it was better to make a little money than to risk one's neck for a foolish revenge. So in the dead of night, on the second day out, when a rough wind had risen from the north, and a fog had come over them, the Captain quietly began to cut away at the rope that tied them to the tug. He cut the rope all round, leaving a sound core in the centre; and when the next gust of wind came, the rope strained and parted quite naturally, so that the people on the tug never suspected the genuineness of the transaction. They looked about in the fog and storm for the scow, but of course they couldn't find her, for Captain Pierpoint, who knew his ground well, had driven her straight ashore before the wind and beached her on a small shelving cove on Manitoulin Island. There they found five men waiting for them, who helped unload the cargo with startling rapidity, for it was all arranged in sacks, not in bulk, and a high slide fixed on the gangway enabled them to slip it quickly down into an underground granary excavated below the level of the beach. After unloading, they made their way down before the breeze towards the jagged rocks of Manitoulin.

It was eleven o'clock on a stormy moonlight night when the 'Fortuna' arrived off the jutting point of the great island. A 'black squall,' as they call it on the lakes, was blowing down from the Sault Ste. Marie. The scow drove about aimlessly, under very little canvas, and the boat was ready to be lowered, 'in case,' the Captain said humorously, 'of any accident.' Close to the end of the point the Captain ordered Pete and Hiram down into the hold. He had shown them beforehand the way to draw the plugs, and had explained that the water would rise very slowly, and they would have plenty of time to get up the companion-ladder long before there was a foot deep of water in the hold. At the last moment Pete hung back a little. The Captain took him quietly by the shoulders, and, without an oath (an omission which told eloquently on Pete) thrust him down the ladder, and told him in his calmest manner to do his duty. Hiram held the light in his hand, and both went down together into the black abyss. There was no time to be lost; they were well off the point, and in another moment the wreck would have lost all show of reasonable probability.

As the two miners went down into the hold, Captain Pierpoint drew quietly from his pocket a large hammer and a packet of five-inch nails. They were good stout nails, and would resist a

considerable pressure. He looked carefully down into the hold, and saw the two men draw the first plug. One after another he watched them till the fourth was drawn, and then he turned away, and took one of the nails firmly between his thumb and forefinger.

Next week everybody at Sarnia was grieved to hear that another of Captain Pierpoint's vessels had gone down off Manitoulin Point in that dreadful black squall on Thursday evening. Both the sailors on board had been drowned, but the Captain himself had managed to make good his escape in the jolly boat. He would be a heavy loser, it was understood, on the value of the cargo, for insurance never covers the loss of grain. Still, it was a fortunate thing that such a delightful man as the Captain had not perished in the foundering of the 'Fortuna.'

III.

SOMEHOW, after that wreck, Captain Pierpoint never cared for the water again. His nerves were shattered, he said, and he couldn't stand danger as he used to do when he was younger and stronger. So he went on the lake no more, and confined his attention more strictly to the 'futures' business. He was a thriving and prosperous person, in spite of his losses; and the underwriters had begun to look a little askance at his insurances even before this late foundering case. Some whispered ominously in underwriting circles that they had their doubts about the 'Fortuna.'

One summer, a few years later, the water on Lake Huron sank lower than it had ever been known to sink before. It was a very dry season in the back country, and the rivers brought down very diminished streams into the great basins. Foot by foot, the level of the lake fell slowly, till many of the wharves were left high and dry, and the vessels could only come alongside in very few deep places. Captain Pierpoint had suffered much from sleeplessness, combined with Canadian ague, for some years past, but this particular summer his mind was very evidently much troubled. For some unaccountable reason, he watched the falling of the river with the intensest anxiety, and after it had passed a certain point, his interest in the question became painfully keen. Though the fever and the ague gained upon him from day to day, and his doctor counselled perfect quiet, he was perpetually consulting charts, and making measurements of the configuration which the coast had now reached, especially at the upper end of

Lake Huron. At last, his mind seemed almost to give way, and weak and feverish as he was, he insisted, the first time for many seasons, that he must take a trip upon the water. Remonstrance was quite useless; he would go on the lake again, he said, if it killed him. So he hired one of the little steam pleasure yachts which are always to let in numbers at Detroit, and started with his wife and her brother, a young surgeon, for a month's cruise into Lake Superior.

As the yacht neared Manitoulin Island, Captain Pierpoint insisted upon being brought up on deck in a chair—he was too ill to stand—and swept all the coast with his binocular. Close to the point, a flat-topped object lay mouldering in the sun, half out of water, on the shoals by the bank. 'What is it, Ernest?' asked the Captain, trembling, of his brother-in-law.

'A wreck, I should say,' the brother-in-law answered, carelessly. 'By Jove, now I look at it with the glass, I can read the name, "Fortuna, Sarnia."'

Captain Pierpoint seized the glass with a shaking hand, and read the name on the stern, himself, in a dazed fashion. 'Take me down stairs,' he said feebly, 'and let me die quietly; and for heaven's sake, Ernest, never let *her* know about it all.'

They took him down stairs into the little cabin, and gave him quinine; but he called for brandy. They let him have it, and he drank a glassful. Then he lay down, and the shivering seized him; and with his wife's hand in his, he died that night in raving delirium, about eleven. A black squall was blowing down from the Sault Ste. Marie; and they lay at anchor out in the lake, tossing and pitching, opposite the green mouldering hull of the 'Fortuna.'

They took him back and buried him at Sarnia; and all the world went to attend his funeral, as of a man who died justly respected for his wealth and other socially admired qualities. But the brother-in-law knew there was a mystery somewhere in the wreck of the 'Fortuna; ' and as soon as the funeral was over, he went back with the yacht, and took its skipper with him to examine the stranded vessel. When they came to look at the bottom, they found eight holes in it. Six of them were wide open; one was still plugged, and the remaining one had the plug pulled half out, inward, as if the persons who were pulling it had abandoned the attempt for fear of the rising water. That was bad enough, and they did not wonder that Captain Pierpoint had shrunk in horror from the revealing of the secret of the 'Fortuna.'

But when they scrambled on the deck, they discovered another fact which gave a more terrible meaning to the dead man's tragedy. The covering of the hatchway by the companion ladder was battened down, and nailed from the side with five-inch nails. The skipper loosened the rusty iron with his knife, and after a while they lifted the lid off, and descended carefully into the empty hold below. As they suspected, there was no damaged grain in it; but at the foot of the companion ladder, left behind by the retreating water, two half-cleaned skeletons in sailor clothes lay huddled together loosely on the floor. That was all that remained of Pete and Hiram. Evidently the Captain had nailed the hatch down on top of them, and left them there terror-stricken to drown as the water rushed in and rose around them.

For a while the skipper and the brother-in-law kept the dead man's secret; but they did not try to destroy or conceal the proofs of his guilt, and in time others visited the wreck, till, bit by bit, the horrible story leaked out in its entirety. Nowadays, as you pass the Great Manitoulin Island, every sailor on the lake route is ready to tell you this strange and ghastly yarn of the foundering of the 'Fortuna.'

J. ARBUTHNOT WILSON.

'Sir Hilary's Prayer.'

To the Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

SIR,—Having observed in one of your early issues an article suggesting a different answer to the celebrated enigma 'Sir Hilary' from that usually accepted—i.e. 'Good-night'—I wrote, in order to set the doubt at rest, to the Princess Mele Barese, *née* Praed, of Naples, a daughter of the poet Winthrop Mackworth Praed, believing that she would be able to speak with full knowledge on the subject.

Her reply to my inquiry is as follows :—

'As to my dear father's charade "Sir Hilary," there is not the smallest question that the answer is "Good-night"—an unsatisfactory answer, as he himself felt, but that that was the word in his mind when he wrote the charade there cannot be the shadow of a doubt.'

If you think this assurance would interest your readers you are at liberty to make any use you please of this communication.

Yours, &c.

LYDIA E. BECKER.

August 3, 1883.

At the Docks : an appeal.

IN the August number of this Magazine an article was published under the above title, giving an account of the useful work that was being carried on by a benevolent and self-sacrificing body of Sisters of Charity in supplying good, wholesome food to the dock labourers at reasonable prices. The writer of the article showed what an inestimable boon is conferred on these poor fellows by the work of these ladies, and expressed a hope that it might be extended in the coming winter. So much interest has been aroused in the matter by this article that the Editor has commissioned the sisters to make the necessary arrangements for starting another truck similar to the 'Don' on November 1. A sufficient sum of money has been guaranteed to start the concern, and the Editor appeals with confidence to the subscribers to this Magazine for sufficient funds to carry it on permanently. The new truck will be christened the 'Donna.' All subscriptions will be acknowledged, and all moneys received accounted for, in the Magazine. The smallest sums will be thankfully received, and should be sent to

The Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE,

39, Paternoster Row,

London, E.C.

The following extract from the article above referred to describes the portion of the whole work which the 'Donna' will be devoted to supplementing:—

Our work is not over when the labourers have been supplied with food; there are others who have a still greater claim on our compassion—the unhired who crowd around the dock gates in hopes of a job. What a sight that is! Should a happy wind blow some stray ship into port, so that a fresh gang of men are wanted, the 'calling foreman' makes his appearance—that is, his head and arms are visible. He does not trust himself among the surging, struggling mass of men who rush forward, but keeps behind a high spiked door leading into St. Katharine's Docks, and from this stronghold makes his selection, giving tickets which entitle the receivers to a shilling's worth or so of hard labour.

The saddest sight of the whole day is the desperate struggle and scramble

which takes place the moment it appears probable that there is a little employment to be had. A hundred or more sometimes rush to each hiring-place, although they know that only six or eight will be hired. What pushing and scrambling there is for the first place! What leaping into the air, climbing upon shoulders, waving of hands, and passionate entreaties to be 'taken on'! All are shouting out something. One urges that he is an old 'hand,' and used to the ways of the place; another that he has not yet got inside the dock, and ought to have a turn. Many claim acquaintance with the foreman, and address him affectionately by name. Some force a smile to gain his attention, but most faces are upturned with a piteous expression of hopelessness and failure. And as so often happens in this world so it is now—the weakest goes to the wall.

Are these poor men, anxious to work, to be left uncared for in their hunger and cold? The answer was partly made by the captain of a sailing vessel, who collected among his crew enough to buy and fit up a convenient hand-truck named after his ship, the 'Don.' The police found standing-ground for it on Tower Hill, close by the spot where numbers of out-of-work men take up their quarters. The sisters undertook to cook the food at their restaurant, which was to supply a hot and sustaining meal at a nominal price, and they devised a nourishing soup and pudding, either of which could be dispensed in large and liberal portions for the sum of one halfpenny.

Who was to sell? was the next question. There were hundreds eager to secure the post, but only on condition that a sister accompanied them. 'We ain't going alone among that low, wild lot, not we,' they said. 'Why, what 'count 'ud they make o' the like of us? Likely as not they'll git mad at the sight of the grub, and steal the food and smash the crocks. But we'll be glad enough of the job if one of the sisters 'ull go too.'

And so every day a sister and her helpers accompany the 'Don' to the foot of Tower Hill. The corner allotted to them is both damp and draughty, and the poor fellows whom they wished to serve seemed unable at first to believe that persons could be found willing to stand there by the hour, in wet and frost, and snow, and biting winds. The 'Don' made its first appearance in summer, and when autumn came daily did the men express their hope that the friendly cart would not desert them at the worst pinch. 'Will you be here in the winter, ma'am?' said one man. 'That's when we'll want you most.' There was a chorus in answer from three or four. 'Yes, in coorse she will! No more starvation now on Tower Hill! will be our cry.' But others were heard to say despairingly, 'No, she'll never do it. It'll be that keen and bitter, standing with the truck, that she'll be forced to give in, and then whatever will become of us we don't know.'

It is needless to say that all through last winter the 'Don' was to be found at its post, and still makes its daily journey to Tower Hill. Its popularity is largely owing to the fact that the sisters 'make up ha'porths;' and great surprise was at first shown at the ladles-full of soup and liberal helps of pudding which could be bought for one halfpenny. Indeed, on the first wholly unexpected appearance of the truck it was looked on with some suspicion. Of what use was it to the ragged, hungry men who had no money to buy food? But the halfpenny system has changed their views; torn pockets are searched, and many stray pence, which formerly were spent at the public-house, are now invested in good food.

After a few days there was quite a rush to the spot when the little cart appeared, and the poor unhired showed that they were determined to keep it to

themselves. One day a respectable working man about to buy his dinner at the 'Don' was warned off instantly. 'Now you be off. This here truck's for us pore unemployed, and not for the likes of you, as can afford to buy a good dinner.' Their bitter disappointment is almost tragic when occasionally supplies have fallen short of the demand. 'Oh, sister,' they say, 'do bring more another day! We can't go without our dinner to-morrow as well. It'll never do if you won't bring us enough.'

On one such occasion a poor fellow was heard thus consoling himself: 'Well, I had a good dinner last week, and that did me for several days. The ALMIGHTY was good to make us men such a good bit of machinery that we can go without grub for days together. Now, a hooss, yer see, soon drops down if it's kept short of food.' Another philosopher perforce observed that it was wonderful how long a man could keep himself alive if he drank plenty of cold water. The men will sometimes treat those who cannot produce even a half-penny to a basin of soup, and share their portion of food with a penniless lad. It is no uncommon occurrence for poor men in the neighbourhood to stop the little bare-footed children who linger about the soup truck, and after a whispered inquiry as to whether they are hungry to give them a halfpenny, with directions what to ask for when they present themselves as customers. One boy asked if a farthing's worth of pudding could be bought, and another without even this smallest coin watched all day by the 'Don' in hopes of coming in for scraps, thinking himself richly rewarded by receiving the turnings-out of the soup cans.

It is already becoming difficult to meet the demand for food, brought hot and well cooked within reach of the hungry. Yet it is hoped that another truck may be started on a neighbouring living-ground. 'There,' we are told by the promoter of the plan, 'may be found the same haggard faces and lantern jaws, the same attenuated frames, the same desperate struggle for bare existence, the same patient, uncomplaining endurance, and, to sum up all, the same need for the interposition of gentle pity. One short winter's day spent at the foot of Tower Hill would go far, we feel sure, to persuade anyone of the cruel need that at present exists for such a work of necessity and mercy as the "Don" represents.' There would be no fear of the supplies running short either this or any succeeding winter if but a few from the West End could witness the daily scene round that food truck.

It need hardly be said that the food supplied to the unhired cannot be sold at remunerative prices, as it is in the workmen's restaurants under the same management. But the latter are the cooking quarters from which all is sent out, with an economy which could not otherwise be attained.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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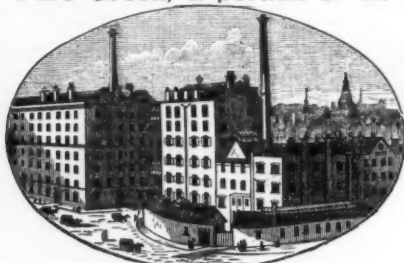
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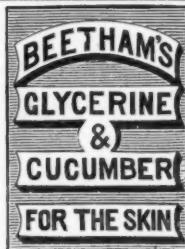
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